

Solar energy's
day in
the sun

PAGE 16

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AS THE WORLD BURNS

The
U.S.
ozone
policy
is full
of holes.



W.K. Burke reports, page 12

Harkin gone, labor looks at slim pickin's

By David Moberg

CHICAGO

As the Democratic presidential primary race moved into the major industrial states after Super Tuesday, most labor unions glumly found themselves without a horse to ride. The loyal steed, Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin, had fallen. Relegated to the grandstands, many labor politicians found little to cheer in the remaining field.

From labor's standpoint, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton and former Massachusetts Sen. Paul Tsongas may discuss some critical worker issues—jobs, health, national economic strategy—but largely ignore or even attack unions as institutions. To varying degrees, both candidates fail to support labor on crucial issues, especially trade.

Both Clinton and Tsongas supported giving the president "fast track" authority to negotiate a trade agreement with Mexico, thus limiting the ability of Congress to impose conditions Clinton says he favors. While Tsongas is the most unabashed free trader—yet still makes a moral argument to "buy American"—candidate Jerry Brown, the former California governor, has angrily criticized any treaty that would "ship jobs to Mexico." In this week's primaries, that view resonated with Michigan autoworkers as well as Chicago factory workers, who saw 49,000 jobs shift to Mexico in the last decade.

Only Brown now expresses strong support for workers' right to organize. Brown, whose labor record as governor of California still wins high praise from union leaders, also is closer in spirit and substance to labor's views, with the glaring exception of his advocacy of a flat income tax and a national sales tax. But few think he can win the nomination.

If pushed into what many see as an unpalatable choice between Clinton and Tsongas, virtually nobody in labor's leadership would support Tsongas, if only because he has opposed banning permanent replacement strikebreakers. Yet that does not mean they will readily embrace Clinton. **View from the sidelines:** This year's presidential race shows how organized labor, once one of the major foundations of the Democratic Party, has slipped even further to the sidelines. By neglecting labor's interests over the years, Democrats have contributed to the decline of unions. That decline in turn has weakened the Democrats politically and may do so again this fall. "Labor may not elect a president by itself," says outgoing Machinist political director William Holayter, "but if you don't have labor support in the election, there's no way you can get elected."

Now Democrats like Clinton bemoan the decline of the middle class, but are unwilling to recognize that strong labor unions helped create and protect that "middle class."

At their February meeting, 30 of the 35 union leaders on the AFL-CIO executive council reportedly were sympathetic to Harkin, but there was not a two-thirds agreement to endorse. Afterward, 14 unions, mainly industrial, announced they would back Harkin. Three unions—AFSCME (public workers), the Teachers, and the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union—unofficially threw their weight behind Clinton. Brown won endorsement from the United Farm Workers and substantial support from the Sheet Metal Workers.

Harkin backers met last week in Washington to plot a new strategy as *In These Times* went to press, but it seemed extremely unlikely that there would be a mass rush to endorse anyone. Instead there is anguished deliberation. "Given where Bush is now, I'd like to feel thrilled," said a service sector union official, "but instead I feel depressed."

Some labor leaders, such as Illinois AFL-CIO President Richard Walsh, predicted a move to Clinton. Communications Workers spokesperson Jeffrey Miller says union polling of local leaders showed that "if it comes down to Clinton and Tsongas, they favor Clinton by a large margin over Tsongas."

Although he supported Harkin in the Georgia primary and remains very impressed with Brown, Atlanta Labor Council President Stewart Acuff says, "The problem for me is, Tsongas is so dangerous on the economy that you almost feel like you have to support Clinton to prohibit us from electing another trickle-down yuppie liberal. It's a very dangerous and distressing thing. There may not be a party left for working people."

Many remain reluctant. "They're too disappointed to think about any other [candidate] in the race," grumbles the Machinists' Holayter. "I don't see how we could endorse Clinton," says one industrial union staffer, "but it's clear he's better for us than Tsongas. But I don't know what we get publicly by endorsing him." The union might express its preference yet not formally endorse, since Clinton falls short on some of its important issues.

Hope springs eternal: There is a surprising amount of sympathy for Brown as well as a lingering hope that labor might still make its influence felt by holding back on an endorsement or working for an open convention battle. Unions could either back uncommitted slates, as advocated by the Michigan state labor federation president and implicitly by United Auto Workers President Owen Bieber, or quietly support Brown to deny Clinton victory. Some labor officials are trying to figure out a way to salvage some labor delegates, so unions at least have a presence at the convention. Although some officials argue that they need to strike a deal with Clinton now or else he will win without owing them anything, others argue that they should not compromise principle and that Clinton will need them eventually.

"My own personal feeling," argues Electrical Workers (IUE) President William Bywater, "is that unless either or both of these candidates [Clinton and Tsongas] say they're for bills we want passed or defeated, like the North American Free Trade Agreement, unless they take a position especially on trade, I wouldn't endorse them. Why should I choose between Humpty and Dumpty? Some people say you've got to choose someone. I've chosen 'someone' so many times I'm sick of it."

Tsongas loses labor not only on his trade and labor rights positions but also on his overall pro-business tax break strategy. Surprised to be running against a candidate to his right at this point, Clinton has begun attacking Tsongas as advocating more failed, '80s-style trickle-down economics in contrast to what he now calls his "trickle-up," "people-based" economics. But as they try to define the contest as a two-man race, Clinton strategists are frankly perplexed about how to combat Brown.

Belaboring their points: Neither Tsongas nor Clinton has a sterling labor record. Tsongas was a leading force in the Senate insisting on massive worker concessions as part of the Chrysler bailout in 1980 and frequently voted against labor-backed trade adjustment and unemployment compensation legislation. Arkansas AFL-CIO President Bill Becker concludes that Clinton's record as governor, if

translated into typical legislative scorecards, would amount to about 25 percent support for labor. Clinton has supported his state's right-to-work law and used it in advertisements to lure business. Becker argues Clinton failed labor on workmen's compensation reform, right-to-know chemical hazards at work, and tax reform (state taxes are highly regressive and riddled with business loopholes). State government gave a loan to a business on strike, enabling the company to break the union.

Most union leaders think that neither Clinton nor Tsongas understands workers, unions nor the role of labor in any progressive economic revival strategy. During the Florida primary, Clinton waxed eloquent about how autoworkers in Arlington, Texas, had made concessions to General Motors in order to stay open, leading to the shutdown of the Willow Run GM plant in Michigan: "There was a story on the front page of the Wall Street Journal today about how a General Motors plant in Texas is saving the jobs because the workers said 'no' to the bosses of their own union, and they said, 'We are going to scrap these work rules....We are going to save our jobs by having the courage to change.' And that's what we are all going to have to do."

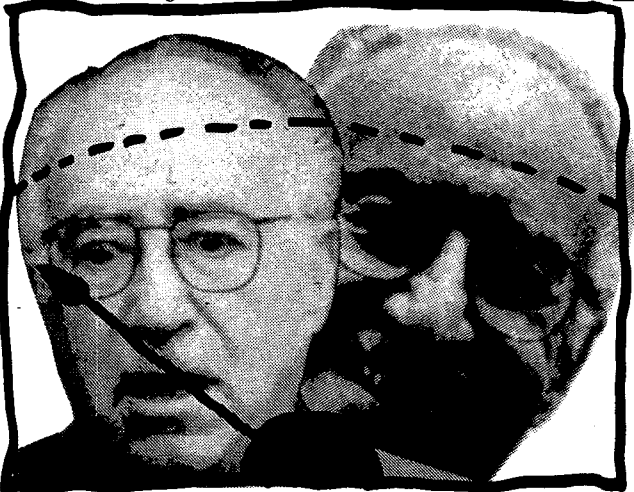
"Plant closings are a 50-state problem. Would that

INSIDE STORY

workers accepting new work rules at any plant would mean the Big Three would be healthy again," UAW spokesman Frank Joyce said of Clinton's "ignorant" statement. "What naivete that betrays." The Willow Run local president endorsed Brown.

Certainly Clinton has picked up lower income voters disproportionately, and in the South. Both Clinton and, to a lesser extent, Tsongas polled union household majorities in their own regions on Super Tuesday. AFSCME leaders, who back Clinton, argue that he's not as bad on trade, right-to-work and other issues as he appears, that he at least expresses some economic populist themes directed to the "middle class," and that he's the best of the lot. Even though Clinton doesn't support AFSCME on the need for a single-payer national health system, as Brown does, Tsongas' plan is little different from Bush's.

Time and again labor strategists returned to the same themes: the need to defeat Bush, the unacceptability of Tsongas, the unelectability of Brown despite his good record and admirable positions, and their "discomfort" with Clinton. Now their fight is to find some way—from striking a deal to an open convention—to win some recognition of their role and their issues. To the long list of how the Democrats may blow their big chance at the White House, add neglect and mistreatment of their former stalwart friend, organized labor.



Trickle down won't do

Read my lips. In fact, read my face (the one on the left). Looks bad and it is. Last week we received only \$1,815 to bring our \$150,000 fund drive up to only \$35,524. So please send us a check today: 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago 60647.

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Inside Story: Who can labor look to now? | 2 |
| Fighting up north when jobs go south | 3 |
| The First Stone/In Person | 4 |
| In Short | 6 |
| The politics of ethnicity in the Baltics | 7 |
| French racists put best Nazi forward | 9 |
| Sandinista identity crisis | 11 |
| As the world burns | 12 |
| Editorial | 14 |
| Letters | 15 |
| Viewpoints: Finding a place in the sun for solar power | 16 |
| Pushing the health-care issue | 17 |
| Israeli policy equals apartheid | 17 |
| In Print: Censorship's slippery slope | 18 |
| A Frank appraisal of the Dems | 19 |
| Classifieds | 23 |
| Future boom—the demographic timebomb | 24 |

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The former employees of a shuttered pharmaceutical factory in Elkhart, Ind., owned by American Home Products Corp., are fighting the plant's closure on city streets and in federal court.

Workers seek antidote to drug company's withdrawal

By Kevin Kelly

ELKHART, IN

JOE AND PATTY BELEW OFTEN FELT THE Whitehall Laboratories Inc. factory where they worked was part of the family. The Elkhart couple, married five years, met there. Joe worked in maintenance, and Patty in production. Together they brought home \$1,500 a week. But between mortgage payments and living expenses, "it took everything we made to live," Patty says.

For workers at the 14 factories that General Motors announced on February 24 it will eventually close, the life of Joe and Patty Belew is both familiar and a sign of things to come. Since their factory closed last November, the Belews have subsisted on \$248 a week in government aid. Patty, a diabetic, has no health insurance. Despite mailing 100 resumes, Joe, 49, can't find work. They're using their charge card to pay bills, including medical costs, but they have only \$500 left on their credit line.

Says Joe, "We don't know what's going to happen."

Unlike the GM workers, though, the workers in Elkhart may have some legal recourse. On February 26, former Whitehall employees filed a \$1 billion class-action lawsuit against Whitehall's parent, American Home Products Corp. (AHP). The suit alleges that AHP moved Elkhart's production to a factory in Puerto Rico to take advantage of tax breaks offered under section 936 of the U.S. tax code. That's a no-no. U.S. companies are allowed to claim tax breaks on Puerto Rican production only

if the company has created new jobs there, not simply shifted them from the mainland. Moreover, the suit alleges fraud, since the company assured the federal and Puerto Rican governments in its petition for 936 benefits that no mainland jobs would be lost.

The company emphatically denies the charges. AHP executives say they closed the Whitehall facility as part of a corporate reorganization that occurred after the company merged with A.H. Robins in late 1989. AHP simply had too much plant space, they say, and the Whitehall facility, though profitable, was the oldest and least efficient. The jobs, the executives say, were largely moved to a factory in Richmond, Va.

That's a claim Whitehall workers loudly dispute. According to their math, roughly 40 percent of Whitehall's production—which includes Anacin, Advil and Dristan—ended up in Puerto Rico. AHP says the number is more like 8 percent. Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 7-515 President Connie Malloy, who represents 550 of the 800 Whitehall workers who lost their jobs when the plant closed last November, says that moving production to Puerto Rico will slice \$27 million from AHP's tax bill in 1992.

The union says the move is worth \$62,500 per worker.

Last year, the OCAW filed its own suit against AHP charging that the corporation committed criminal fraud when it relocated its plant. But after the Whitehall workers filed their class-action lawsuit last month, the judge postponed OCAW's March 31 trial date.

To the rescue: What's shaping up is a crucial battle over the rights of American companies to shift jobs to Puerto Rico. If the class-action trial is won by the workers, the ruling could impact the profits of dozens of U.S. companies located in Puerto Rico. These corporations collected tax breaks from Uncle Sam worth over \$2 billion last year.

Then there's the plight of workers employed by the transplants. University of Puerto Rico economics Professor Francisco Catala says the 936 plants employ 80,000, more than half Puerto Rico's manufacturing workforce. Typically, Puerto Rican workers earn minimum wage and receive no benefits, but the transplant workers earn up to \$6 an hour and get such benefits as medical insurance. If 936 dries up, Catala says, these jobs might be threatened.

But winning the case could rescue the

lives of many Whitehall workers. The Elkhart plant closing has exacted a steep toll on them, and the community they live in. Indeed, the 800 workers who lost their jobs when Whitehall closed vividly portray the human cost of layoffs. A court victory could cushion the blow and, they say, help ensure that other American workers don't lose their jobs.

Like the bad fortune of Gary Gilbert. He landed a job at Whitehall eight years ago after being laid off twice elsewhere. He mixed the ingredients for Anacin aspirin and made \$35,000 in a good year. But when AHP announced in September 1990 that Whitehall would close, he started to drink heavily.

"The last 18 months has been a living hell," he says. Unable to overcome depression or control his drinking, Gilbert, 38, checked into a local treatment program. Though counseling helped, he's now stuck with \$5,000 in medical bills that he can't pay. His wife's father is covering the \$660 monthly mortgage, and he says his lost self-esteem drove him and his wife apart. "I don't feel like a provider or a husband," Gilbert says.

Often times, a layoff simply exacerbates an already bad situation. Finess Smith and her husband were pushed into bankruptcy when she lost her job at the same time her husband's child-support payments to his first wife were increased by \$100 a week. The couple has fallen behind in their mortgage payments. Her new job at \$6.50 an hour—half what she made at Whitehall—can't make ends meet. If she can't get some relief in bankruptcy court, she says, she'll

Continued on page 8

IN THESE TIMES MARCH 18-24, 1992 3

By Joel Bleifuss

It's a mad ad world

One of the most interesting, and no doubt least reported, studies to come out of Washington, D.C. this year is an examination of how the national news media is being "corrupted in the service of commercialism." The 76-page report, titled *Dictating Content: How advertising pressure can corrupt a free press*, was released last week by the Center for the Study of Commercialism, an organization dedicated to countering the commercial forces that promote consumption over citizenship.

The author of *Dictating Content*, Ronald Collins, sums up the problem of the "new censorship" this way: "The commercialization of the media involves a long-term erosion of principle, with a greater movement away from informing the citizenry and a corresponding movement toward facilitating the advertising/marketing process." An ABC executive is more succinct, saying, "The network is paying affiliates to carry network commercials, not programs. What we are is a distribution system for Procter & Gamble."

The most interesting part of the report is a case-by-case analysis of how corporate interests wield their financial clout to shape editorial policy. Many of the reporters interviewed by Collins feared being fired or blacklisted and therefore requested anonymity. For instance, an East Coast magazine editor "confirmed that he was fired after clashing with his publisher over the issue of advertiser interference, but said he would jeopardize his future in the industry if he talked on the record."

Advertiser influence shapes the presentation of the news in two ways: through direct economic censorship and through journalistic self-censorship—a subtly corrosive malady that all reporters who have worked in the mainstream press are personally familiar with.

Market forces: Particularly hard hit by the "new censorship" are those who cover consumer issues. TV journalist Herb Weisbaum of Seattle spent his time at the 1990 Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) convention "trading horror stories with consumer reporters from across the country." As he reported in the fall 1990 *IRE Journal*, "Everyone is feeling the sting of 'economic censorship.' Stories are being killed, stories are being watered down and, saddest of all, stories are not even being attempted because reporters know they'll never make it on the air."

Take the case of the real estate industry, which accounts for 18.5 percent of all newspaper classified advertising. "It is rare for papers to assign tough reporters to the real estate beat," writes Collins, "even though housing is the average family's biggest investment and readers crave consumer-oriented news about the industry." He points out that a *Washington Journalism Review* survey of 42 real estate editors found that almost half claimed that their "publishers and senior editors had prohibited critical coverage of the industry for fear of offending advertisers. More than 80 percent said advertisers had threatened to pull ads because of negative coverage. Over a third knew of advertisers that had done so."

Sometimes the news that is censored involves stories about the media itself. In the section dealing with GE/NBC, this point is made time and again. Take the news about the GE boycott being sponsored by the consumer interest group INFAC. INFAC's former media director, Henry Hughes, says he discussed the boycott in June 1991 with a bureau chief of the American Public Radio financial news program *Marketplace*. Hughes recalls that the *Marketplace* bureau chief, who is not employed by GE, was "literally screaming, 'Media censorship—media smensorship—I have a family to support. You're nuts to think we could do anything on it ... I know for a fact they'd run me out of here.'"

And it is not just stories, but mere phrases that attract the censor's attention. In the November 1991 *Columbia Journalism Review*, Lawrence Grossman, the former president of NBC News, wrote about a phone call he received from GE/NBC Chairman Jack Welsh on Oct. 20, 1987. Welsh had called to complain that NBC was using the term "Black Monday" to describe the previous day's stock market crash. Welsh charged that such negative reporting was hurting the value of GE stock.

The new news order: The media also censors itself, or as Collins puts it, trades "editorial integrity for advertiser approval."

Editors with their eye on the ad dollar rise to the top. Bill Kovach, the former editor of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, told Collins, "The trend for the past decade has been to promote editors who, if they are not business people, then they are business-conscious." The editor of the new order does "nothing controversial," explains an editorial sales representative at the Hous-

**Mike Crotty: God's gangbuster**

By Mary Paleologos

Last summer, Mike Crotty stood in the blood of a Harpies gang member whose entire back had been blown open by an exploding bullet. This visit to the emergency room of Los Angeles County General Hospital was not the first or last for Crotty, a priest at St. Vincent's Church in south central Los Angeles.

Over the past two years, at least 25 youths in his neighborhood have been killed by Ghetto Boys, Locos 13, Dead Ends, "55's" and other gangs protecting their turf. In one incident, an 11-year-old girl was accidentally killed in a drive-by shooting. Crotty estimates there are 30 gangs located within the one square mile radius of the largely Hispanic parish.

"I've never seen so much blood in my life," says the 31-year-old Crotty. "And they're incredibly bad shots." Crotty has even had to deal with rival gangs shooting it out during funeral processions.

After watching his community descend into the third level of gang hell, Crotty concluded that a new non-violent approach and attitude were needed to deal with the gang problem.

"We need to denounce the violence and call gang members back into the community with love instead of more violence," he says. According to Crotty, the police's "us and them" attitude toward gangs is not working. It is only escalating the violence and spawning a cycle of revenge and retaliation.

"Some police act like another gang. They look at kids as their enemy. They call them punks and scum. And some do not hesitate to beat kids with night sticks," he says. "I've heard of officers in East

L.A. taking kids to abandoned buildings and beating them with rubber hoses. But the anger is not working."

The escalating violence came to a head last August, when two L.A. police shot and killed a young Hispanic man in the back. According to witnesses, he was shot as he was running from the police. Freddie Santana, 27, was not a gang member but a loner hooked on sniffing spray paint, Crotty says.

In a press conference, Crotty and community leaders publicly denounced the actions of police as brutal and unnecessary. Crotty further condemned the violence in four consecutive sermons. Ironically, the tragedy opened dialogue among police, community leaders and gang members. "The death brought us life," Crotty says. "Round-table discussions have started, and we're working out a peace plan. The problem is so big and so horrendous. The burden has been placed on police, and they can't handle it. There needs to be practical solutions like jobs, alternative activities for youth, parenting programs and helping kids finish high school."

Officials from the nearby University of Southern California campus have offered school resources in the form of music lessons, sports and recreational activities, acting classes and tickets to college sports games.

One at a time: A Next Steps Committee, made up of community leaders, police and gang members, met last Wednesday to develop a concrete plan to "bring peace to the community." Present at the round-table discussion were a local precinct officer, three Locos 13 members, director of the Martin Luther King Center for Non-Violence in Los Angeles

and half a dozen parishioners. Crotty says he has talked to three gang members who are "excited about doing this." In the meantime, Crotty has mobilized church staff and parishioners as soldiers or friendly persuasion.

In February, the church held an outdoor evening Mass in honor of the Virgin Mary. More than 100 people attended, including about 15 members of the Dead End gang, in whose territory the Mass was held. Police stood nearby to deter rival gangs from starting a fight. Crotty's sermon that night was about loving your enemies.

"I wanted to give them something to reflect on because the gang rule is vengeance," Crotty says. And the trend now is to get mothers or baby sons or daughters or a relative. Gang members were here and curious because they want to be a part of things. They are our children, and the Masses are calling them back home."

And at Christmas time, more than 100 people also participated in a peace procession. Marchers sang Mexican Christmas carols and moved through all the "conflict zones"; candles and flowers were left at places where victims of the gang wars had been killed. "Gang members jumped in the procession," Crotty says. "The march imitated when Joseph and Mary looked for a room at an inn. It also symbolized how gang kids look for shelter in the community."

Sister Diane Donahue, who organizes for affordable housing in the St. Vincent Parish, says Crotty has managed to win the trust of rival gang members.

"He is respected," says Donahue. "He moves about the community and can talk to one gang without resentment from other gangs. He has credibility with a number of gangs. No one else is doing this kind of outreach." Some in the community, however, are not so enthusiastic about Crotty's benevolent attitude toward gang members or his efforts at gentle redemption. Crotty recalls someone telling him, "That's great, Father. Nice thought. But remember, they're always planning your death and mine."

ACES: Crotty and five other ministers are now working to establish an alternative school for 4- to 18-year olds. All the participating churches are located along a 15-block stretch of Adams Boulevard and include three Catholic and three Protestant churches (Episcopal, Lutheran and African Methodist Episcopal [AME]). The alliance goes by the name of Adams Corridor of Ecumenical Strategy—or ACES.

The school—as yet unnamed—is being organized under the auspices of Soledad Enrichment Center, a gang ministry of the Catholic Church founded 10 years ago by Brother Modesto Leon, a Dominican monk, who developed the concept of alternative schools. It is scheduled to open in late March and will accommodate up to 30 students. It will be located in the basement of the Ward AME church. Facilities include 15 IBM-donated computers. Juvenile gang members who are on probation will each day receive five hours of instruction in reading, math and art by a teacher from the Los Angeles Unified School District and teachers' aides. Writing classes, gang prevention programs, GED instruction, field trips, organized sports activities and referrals to trade schools are also part of the program.

"They will see another whole side of life," Crotty says. "It's a significant step in working with gangs, giving kids dignity and calling them people."

SOULS: Crotty says his gang ministry is working because he sees more gang kids coming to Sunday Mass. One gang member in particular, Crotty believes, is on the verge of leaving his gang. The men confided in Crotty that he had come close to killing someone. "He broke down and cried. It really

shook him up. When I first knew him, he didn't want anything to do with me. Then he started coming to Mass, sitting in the back. Six or seven weeks later, he was in the front row. Now he's trying to find a job. It's my closest success story."

Crotty believes gang members are the end result of "super dysfunctional families," where there is alcohol or drug addiction. Others come from broken homes where a single working parent has little time to heap sorely needed attention on children.

"They are lonely, alone, not connected with anyone," Crotty says. "They look for community by hanging out on a street corner, painting walls, boozing or gangbanging. They are violated kids from broken homes who end up victimizing others."

"Society needs to take responsibility for the discrimination, poverty and inadequate educational opportunities that fuel the gang problem," Crotty says. "All the kids in gangs live in the poverty of the ghetto for a reason. Families are starting out, there is limited economic opportunity and it is the only place they can live. How can a teacher educate when she is worried about getting knifed or injured? Schools in Los Angeles have become day-care centers for problem kids."

Crotty's commitment to social causes embraces international as well as local issues. For a number of years, he has actively protested U.S. policy in Central America, getting arrested twice. In July 1989, Crotty traveled to Central America to better understand the area that was home to the large groups of refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua who make up his parish. "I went there and saw where our government's money was going. I made the choice to protest our government aiding El Salvador with our money."

Acting locally: But Crotty usually stays close to home. Two years ago, he founded a shelter for homeless men in the St. Vincent's sacristy, the place where religious articles are normally stored. Each night, a parish family brings dinner to the 10 men usually housed there at one time. Most are immigrants from Mexico looking for work, and in almost all cases, they find jobs within three months, Crotty says.

Crotty says he wanted to be a priest since he was a second-grader growing up in Maywood, Calif. After being ordained in 1988, Crotty arrived Federal Express-style on the doorstep of St. Vincent's. But a rival love almost stopped his debarkation.

In 1986, during his last year of theology school, Crotty's devotion was tested when he fell in love with a woman. He made the decision to stick with priesthood during his internship at St. Vincent's later that same year. "It was painfully hard," Crotty says. "I could have made a good dad and husband."

In his everyday life of leading his flock, Crotty follows the example of a priest he knew as a child, Father Carl Sutphin. "He was a people's priest," Crotty says. "He played baseball with the kids and knew everybody's name. That really impressed me. It's important to know people, to go to their fiestas and baptisms. I ride a bike every day and try to be with people, to be there to share their moments."

The Hispanic parish has wholeheartedly accepted the Anglo priest.

Emma Suarez, a parishioner at the church, says her community "loves and respects" Crotty. "I don't care what nationality he is," Suarez says. "He is open to the whole community. He does a lot of service and he attends to people's needs."

Crotty says he feels the support of the community and his acceptance in a culture that is not his own. He says, "Although I'm a gringo, I am a Latino in the heart." □

Mary Paleologos writes for *The Star* newspaper group of Chicago Heights, Ill. Father Crotty can be reached at St. Vincent's, 621 West Adams Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90007.

ton Chronicle. "Our only concern is giving editorial support to our ad projects."

The Gannett newspaper chain, for example, sent out a memo to the editors of its papers suggesting that they boost circulation by featuring more coverage of "shopping trends and sales, new products and restaurants"—and less coverage of institutions like local government.

It was in a similar vein, Collins reports, that "last year the Woodbridge, N.J., *News Tribune* took an award-winning investigative reporter off the environmental beat, leaving the beat open, and assigned him to general news. Meanwhile, the paper heralded the renovation of a local mall by creating a regular column called 'Gone Shopping.' One recent column began this way: 'Just because Santa paid a visit yesterday, littering your living room with tinsel, shredded gift wrap and cardboard shirt boxes, don't you dare entertain the silly notion that your Christmas shopping is finished!'"

Coughin' nails: Nowhere is the new censorship more documented than in the role cigarette advertisers play in shaping coverage of health issues. In the mid-'80s tobacco companies spent \$400 million exploiting nicotine addiction on the pages of magazines.

In October 1985, *Time* magazine carried a special ad section devoted to health. The American Academy of Family Physicians supplied the informational copy. *Time* magazine provided the editorial expertise that deleted all references to the hazards of smoking—a decision that must have pleased the multinational tobacco corporations who bought seven pages in that same edition.

In February 1988, the editors at *Newsweek* published a cover story titled "What You Should Know About Heart Attacks." The back cover featured an ad for Malibu cigarettes, while on the inside, editors deleted any mention in the story that smoking tobacco contributes to heart attacks.

A *Time* spokesman explained the curious way the major newsweeklies cover health issues this way: "*Time*, as does *Newsweek*, has a lot of cigarette advertising. Do you carry material that's insulting to your advertiser?"

Time and *Newsweek's* intellectual little brother, *The New Republic*, has been similarly corrupted. In 1985, Martin Peretz, *The New Republic* owner and editor in chief, canned a story about the ill effects of smoking because the article lacked what he termed a "balanced treatment." The article's author, David Owen, went on to publish his story in *The Washington Monthly* and added this postscript: "What was the basis for [*The New Republic's*] decision [to kill the story]? 'Massive losses of advertising revenue,' said Leon Wieseltier, the editor who had assigned it. Peretz told me that he thought smoking was not as dangerous as doctors had made it out to be and that, therefore, 'this is a costly crusade that I am willing to forgo.'"

Dictating Content's case studies reaffirm the existence of editorial tendencies that have been long suspected. Taking this analysis a step further, one can conclude that the same media that allows its editorial policy to be dictated by corporate advertisers can be similarly influenced by political power brokers who would prefer that nothing be said that will challenge the status quo.

The root of the problem lies not in the fact that advertising is pernicious, but that a corporate-owned media that is dependent on corporate advertising is inherently unable to provide the public with the benefits of a free press. Are there alternatives?

Todd Gitlin in his introduction to the study touches on this question when he writes, "Journalists may properly ask what system of finance would be preferable to the predominance of the big bucks. Instead of thinking the question [is] answered merely by asking it, Americans should pay more attention to systems of public regulation where private media financing is severed from [having any] control—like Britain's Channel 4—or bolstered by state grants—as in Sweden's newspaper subsidy."

And Collins points out, "The First Amendment grants the press special protections that it may assist the people in making informed choices about their political and economic affairs. This is its constitutional business. Yet when the mission of the press becomes otherwise, one of the high purposes of the First Amendment is undermined."

Perhaps there is a constitutionally mandated imperative to re-examine the nature of media ownership. Do businesses have a constitutionally protected right to impose their marketing propaganda on the public? When addressing such underlying questions *Dictating Content* falls short. The study concludes with some worthwhile recommendations for reform. But is it reform we need or restructuring?

For a copy of *Dictating Content*, send \$10 to the Center for the Study of Commercialism, 1875 Connecticut Ave., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20009-5728.

By Jim McNeill

A different scorched Earth policy

Suppose a huge industrial firm recklessly spilled hazardous chemicals onto the ground for decades. Then, imagine that the firm, after discovering the leak had contaminated local drinking water, attempted to profit from the leak by selling residents a special filtration system for their water wells. Surely, no business would attempt such a scam?

In fact, Florida writer Larry Scott says "something very much like this ... is happening right now" on a global scale. But, instead of polluting our water, Scott says, the guilty party is transforming "the very light in the sky" into a deadly poison by producing ozone-destroying chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Scott, an adviser to Jerry Brown's presidential campaign, notes that many of the chemical companies that manufacture CFCs also produce the sunscreen lotions, lip balms and other products that protect us from the ultraviolet rays streaming through the earth's rapidly thinning ozone layer (see article on page 12).

Scott believes "offending businesses [should] pay for the negative impacts that ozone depletion will have on our and our children's lives." He hopes to recover these costs by filing a "Scorched Earth Lawsuit," a class-action suit seeking damages from responsible companies. Anyone interested in pursuing the suit can write Scott at: P.O. Box 116, Aripeka, FL 34679.

Remembering the delivery of birth control

As *Roe vs. Wade* totters on the brink of extinction, we thought it might be nice to commemorate the anniversary of a Supreme Court decision that paved the way for the landmark abortion-rights ruling. March 22 will mark the 20th anniversary of *Baird vs. Eisenstadt*, a 1972 contraceptive-rights case cited six times in the *Roe vs. Wade* decision.

The *Baird* case grew out of a public lecture delivered on April 6, 1967, at Boston University by flamboyant reproductive rights crusader Bill Baird. During the lecture—attended primarily by unwed college students—Baird discussed birth control methods, displayed birth control devices and gave a container of contraceptive foam to a 22-year-old single woman. The actions clearly violated a Massachusetts law prohibiting dissemination of birth control information and devices to unmarried individuals. Suffolk County Sheriff Thomas Eisenstadt had Baird arrested, and a local court convicted Baird of the crime. But Baird was vindicated five years later when the Supreme Court ruled 6-to-1 that the right of access to birth control devices extended to single persons as well as to married couples. The ruling overturned laws in 26 states.

—Contributed by George Fish

Bringing it all back home

If the ongoing Mideast Peace Talks continue to falter, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker may want to call on Youngstown, Ohio's Coalition for Peace in the Middle East for help. Last fall Baker called new Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories "an obstacle to peace." So far, Baker's protestations have done little to slow their construction. In contrast, the coalition recently concluded a successful campaign against a Pennsylvania company that may—or may not—have sent prefabricated homes to the Occupied Territories.

The campaign began on July 11 when the coalition sent a letter to Fagen's Inc., inquiring about a \$1 million contract it had signed to construct pre-fabricated homes for new Israeli settlements. Initially, Fagen's refused to discuss the deal with the coalition. But when a group from the coalition showed up at the company's Wexford, Pa., headquarters in September, Fagen's officials hastily assured the coalition that the homes were not being erected in the Occupied Territories. Soon after that meeting, however, the coalition found an August 26 article in the *National Home Center News* reporting that Fagen's homes would house "Russian Jews immigrating to the Golan Heights."

In response, the coalition began picketing a Fagen's retail outlet in mid-November. In January, with the campaign continuing, company President Jack Fagen told a Youngstown paper that the company's homes had been sold in an "arms-length" transaction to a U.S. dealer who then transferred the homes to an Israeli firm. Fagen insisted the homes had not gone to the Golan Heights.

Fagen, who had refused to talk with the coalition, finally met with coalition leaders on January 30. Fagen told them the company had concluded the contract and had no plans to seek further business in Israel. After the meeting, the coalition suspended the campaign, saying Fagen's had "come to the understanding that providing for illegal Israeli settlements does not make good business sense."

Once prosperous Estonia struggles with independence

TALLINN, ESTONIA—Much like the other newly independent former Soviet republics, this Baltic nation is a land of incongruities. Politicians debate constitutional issues in parliament while former Soviet soldiers meander purposelessly along the streets. The country's economic and political foundation is unraveling, though its long-suppressed culture is being reborn.

"Welcome to the free Tallinn," beckons a cheerful young woman on a billboard advertising the newest ferry from Stockholm to the Estonian capital. The message, written only in Swedish, is apparently not meant for Estonians, who would scoff at the notion of a free Estonia. Nearly seven months later, independence still eludes this land of 1.5 million people.

"We lived without hope," said Senan Saharov, a 34-year-old unemployed sound technician, referring to life under five decades of Soviet occupation. "And we still do." For Estonians today, little about their living has changed for the better.

With the recent resignation of Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar, Estonians' confidence in creating a stable government and a viable economy is fading. Although once considered prosperous compared to other former Soviet republics, Estonia finds itself in crisis.

The lack of gasoline, the shortage of food and the continued presence of Soviet troops have brought this country's progress to a virtual standstill. While temperatures drop below zero, Estonians sit in unheated apartments, experiencing another consequence of severing ties with the former Soviet Union. After independence, the price of heating oil climbed dramatically as subsidies from Moscow dried up.

The government's failure to agree on ways to improve the country's bleak prospects may foretell the political and economic deterioration in other republics. Unlike the violent situation in Georgia, Estonia's political backbone is quietly crumbling under the weight of economic decay. The government seems to be tied down by a kind of inertia long bred in the Communist era.

"The main problem is that this government isn't behaving independently," said Juri Adams, co-author of the new constitution and vice president of the Estonian National Independence Party. "It has no idea how to do anything other than what has been done here before."

Most government officials have little, if any, training in democracy. Yet Savisaar, himself a former Communist, resigned under pressure in late January after coming under fire for his authoritarian style. Savisaar's departure has perhaps shown that at least there is a sizable number of politicians who know that undemocratic leadership is what they do not want.



Estonians' guarded response to independence has not only been conditioned by the Soviet occupation. They know that today may be just another interlude between occupations, as was their 22-year stretch of freedom between the world wars. Having been ruled by Germans, Poles, Swedes and Russians for centuries, Estonians are inured to having masters other than themselves.

But the Soviet presence is indelible. Many Estonians feel threatened by the large Russian minority in their country (see story page 7). Having once been privileged members of Estonian society, many Russians must soon apply for citizenship under terms of a law passed in February. Only Russians who lived in Estonia before 1940 and their direct descendants have been granted citizenship. The rest have to wait two years and pass an Estonian language exam.

If independence is as much a state of mind as it is a political reality, then Estonians fare considerably better now than they did before the August putsch. Although the economic and political situation worsens, Estonian cultural life since the coup attempt is being invigorated. Today people are actively

exploring their culture after years of fearing punishment. A renaissance, which began during the independence movement, continues to spawn a wealth of newspapers and cultural celebrations. The Estonian language is now freely spoken.

During a discussion with her 11th-grade English class in Tallinn School No. 21, Marju Tapfer shakes her head in disbelief at how much has improved. It was only five years ago when she almost lost her job for showing students a women's fashion magazine from the West.

Estonia's culture, having suffered from being maintained in hiding, is still reviving. "It was like living two lives—one that you had to live and one that you lived inside, at home and with family," says Kirsti Made, an Estonian Ministry of Education official. "This has been the model of our life, and that is perhaps why we survived." While taking pride in having persevered, some fear that new pressures, from capitalism to apathy, will undermine their culture.

Estonia's uneven progress in the last half year has left many pessimistic about the country's short-term prospects but hopeful about its long-term future. "We are not independent," Adams says. "We have only won the right to become independent."

—Victor Peskin & Lise Strom

By Vladimir Klimenko

RIGA, LATVIA

STROLLING THROUGH THE COBBLESTONE streets of Old Town, one almost forgets about the gloomy atmosphere prevailing throughout the former Soviet Union.

Renovation crews, many of them from Poland, have restored much of the historic district's look. Narrow 400-year-old houses with freshly-painted pastel stucco walls and dark shutters remind the visitor of Riga's past

BALTICS

glory as a major Hanseatic League seaport.

These and other visible changes—such as the widespread availability of imported food like German beer and chocolate—reflect Latvia's re-entry into the community of European nations.

Setting up is hard to do: Relaxed appearances aside, however, the transition from Soviet-style bureaucratic socialism has been anything but easy for Latvia and its two Baltic neighbors, Lithuania and Estonia. See story page 6.)

Having finally obtained their divorce from the Kremlin, the Baltic countries must now focus on their own political conflicts, based largely on issues of ethnicity.

Today's most controversial issue boils down to passports. Some people will become full-fledged citizens, others will qualify only as "resident aliens" eligible for full citizenship in several years, while a smaller contingent of non-indigenous (largely Russian) military personnel and their families will have to leave altogether.

It's not just a matter of status, either. Citizenship determines property rights: specifically, the opportunity to participate in the buy-out of state enterprises once full-fledged privatization gets underway.

Nationalist Balts, buoyed by their countries' full independence, insist on restoring their countries' preannexation status. They demand an immediate withdrawal of former-Soviet troops from their territories as well as strict legislation that limits full citizenship to pre-1940 citizens and their descendants. People who migrated to the Baltics after 1940 might be eligible for citizenship depending on several criteria, including the number of years lived there. Anyone who moved to the Baltics from other Soviet republics while serving in the military would not be eligible even for residency.

Estonia's parliament recently passed such law. Latvia and Lithuania are soon expected to follow suit.

"Our goal is to preserve Latvia as a Latvian state," says Yuri Boyars, a legislator who drafted a version of his country's citizenship bill. "This presupposes some sort of dominant role played by Latvian citizens."

He believes the Latvian nation needs to be protected by legislation. "Only 52 percent of the population here is Latvian," says Boyars, former law professor. "They feel endangered as an ethnic group in their own homeland."

Asked how this squares with humanitarian ideals, Boyars says some sort of mild initial discrimination in favor of Latvians is necessary to assure the country's national identity. Not surprisingly, he cites Israeli citizenship laws as a positive example.



Ethnicity issues define new political agendas

Arrayed against the Baltic nationalists are equally vociferous militants representing the "Russian-speaking population," a term used to connote all non-Baltic ethnic minorities including Russians, Ukrainians and Jews. Many "pro-Russian" activists are former Communist Party (CP) functionaries who turned to ethnic politics in the late '80s as a counterweight to independence-minded Baltic movements.

Pawns in a game: As for the bulk of the "Russian-speakers" themselves, most of them moved to the Baltics from other parts of the Soviet Union after World War II. Most came in search of higher living standards. Very few imagined themselves to be "colonizers" since hardly any of them knew the truth about the Baltics' forced annexation by Stalin in 1940.

The Kremlin encouraged this migration to simultaneously solve two problems: increase the industrial labor pool and dilute the indigenous population, thereby facilitating the "Sovietization" of these three republics. The "Russian-speakers," for their part, did not suspect that they were pawns in someone's game or that anyone would later call them "colonizers."

Like many of their brethren living on the fringes of the former empire, many "Russian-speakers" in the Baltics came to feel threatened by the rise of local ethnic consciousness during the perestroika years.

The failure of the August coup and the Baltic states' immediate breakaway from Moscow caused a serious setback for the CP-backed Russian groups. For one thing,

the coup attempt discredited many of the conservative Communist functionaries who headed the Russian groups. More importantly, the USSR was no more, while Baltic independence was a reality.

Communist-aligned groups such as the "Ravnopraviye" (or equal rights) faction in Latvia's parliament got a second hearing once citizenship legislation came closer to being a reality.

Anatoly Safonov, an ethnic Russian legislator from the "Ravnopraviye" bloc, calls the citizenship debate a prelude to "Baltic apartheid." A high-ranking member of the now-outlawed Latvian Communist Party, the 47-year-old Safonov makes no bones about missing the good old days.

His only consolation today is that "now Yeltsin has to face the same problems that Gorbachov had."

"Finally they're beginning to listen to our point of view," Safonov says about Yeltsin's government. "After all, why does Moscow need 300,000 refugees from Latvia?"

Safonov clearly exaggerates the situation.

The good news so far is that nationalist passions get played out more in parliament than in the street.

But the fact is "Russian-speakers" do fear being made second-class citizens. And while few of them would actually choose to leave the Baltics, some—primarily the military—are being forced to do so.

Strict citizenship guidelines put progressive Russians in a quandary as well. Until last month, Yevgeny Golikov, an ethnic Russian resident of Estonia, represented the Estonian government in Moscow.

A longstanding supporter of Estonian independence, Golikov now objects to what he perceives to be a discriminatory definition of citizenship.

Ethnicity and class: Under current legislation, a resident non-citizen such as Golikov is ineligible to participate in national elections, become a member of joint-stock companies and own farmland or property except for the apartment or house in which he lives.

"I've lived in Estonia almost my entire life," says Golikov, 41. "Now, suppose I finally do get Estonian citizenship in two years. A good deal of state property will be sold before I become eligible to participate in any auction, since much of privatization will occur in these first few years."

"By then I will have become a citizen of a society in which ethnic differences have become translated into class differences," he continues. "In other words, I will be surrounded by people who became property-owners on the basis of their nationality."

Will tolerance, self-restraint and modern European-style values save the Baltics from violence? Or will the economic pressures of the coming year, coupled with an ethnically-based political radicalization, foster greater hostility and resentment?

The good news so far is that nationalist passions get played out more in parliament than among people in the street.

"When it comes to interethnic relations, ordinary people exercise much more self-control than the politicians do," Golikov says. "At least there's no yawning gulf between ethnic groups in Estonia the way there is, say, between Armenians and Azerbaijanis."

Golikov also concedes that others like him who have lived in the Baltics for many years "would have a hard time returning to Russia."

"We've become more European in our habits. Among other things, we've learned to become more tolerant."

But if anything, this century offers plenty of examples of European irrationality: two world wars, totalitarianism and a stubborn attachment to colonialism, to name a few. Moreover, the civil war in Yugoslavia is only the most vivid reminder that ethnic violence has returned with a vengeance to the European continent.

What might enable the Baltic states to achieve a desired stability is a combination of positive European values along with a vivid sense of the dangers ahead.

But first, people will have to avoid the most obvious pitfall along the way: exaggerated ethnic identity. A heightened nationalism may well be the rule for small newly independent countries. But in the geopolitical tinderbox that was the USSR, such passions are quickly becoming an excessive luxury that can easily provoke a similar but far more dangerous reaction from an aggrieved larger neighbor. □

Vladimir Klimenko is an *In These Times* correspondent in Moscow.



Whitehall's former workers are suing American Home Products for allegedly shifting their jobs to a Puerto Rican plant.

Elkhart

Continued from page 3

lose her house later this year.

The plant closing hit hard because a job

at Whitehall was like money in the bank. The factory produced popular drugs and the average tenure of the workforce was more than 20 years. OCAW won successive raises, boosting the average wage to more than \$13

an hour when the plant shut down. Most manufacturing jobs in Elkhart, population 45,000, go for half that and are in the wildly cyclical recreational vehicle industry.

Angie Roll discovered very quickly just how hard life would be outside Whitehall. After losing her high-paying job, she couldn't find any work at comparable pay. Frustrated, she started fighting with her husband, who had lost his job at another company, and they separated. Finally, she settled for a \$6.50 an hour job without benefits. The only good news was Angie and her husband decided not to let Whitehall ruin their marriage.

Big headache: The Whitehall workers hadn't expected their plant to close. OCAW Local President Malloy says the company assured the union in 1989 that the Robins acquisition would bring more work to Elkhart, not less. That was the same assurance she says company officials gave Whitehall workers when they opened the factory in Puerto Rico during 1986. "They were always very positive," she says.

That optimism proved misplaced. An internal study conducted during 1990, the company says, showed it had excess plant space. So company officials huddled and decided to close Elkhart. Rumors began to swirl in mid-1990 that bad news was coming, but the worst wasn't confirmed until the fall of that year when the company announced that the Whitehall facility would close in late 1991.

Needless to say, the layoffs have given Elkhart a headache. The county's unemployment rate jumped to 7 percent in December from 6.2 percent in November when the final 300 workers hit the street. So far, fewer than half the laid off workers have found jobs. A study by the Midwest Center for Labor Research says the closing will cost an additional 2,500 workers their jobs in Elkhart as the shockwaves ripple through the business community. Businesses will suffer, too. For example, Franklin Press, Inc., a commercial printer, says it lost 20 percent of its sales when Whitehall left.

Statistics also reflect the human toll. Pa-

tricia Barber, director of Switchboard Concern, a local suicide-prevention hotline, says suicide and depression calls spiked during 1991, partly because of the Whitehall closing. Last year, the agency received 65 calls from suicidal people compared to 53 in 1990. Calls for depression jumped 184 percent to 460. Barber believes at least three of the suicide calls were from former Whitehall workers.

But many former employees were galvanized when they lost their jobs. For over a year, Malloy has led a spirited effort to nail AHP for its missteps. In 1990, the union brought in filmmaker Michael Moore, creator of *Roger & Me*, the acclaimed documentary that lampooned General Motors Chairman Roger Smith for shutting factories in Flint, Mich. Moore called the Whitehall closing "an act of terrorism" and tried—though unsuccessfully—to seek an interview with AHP Chairman John Stafford.

The union has also assiduously courted the media. The Whitehall story has been profiled by Bill Moyers, ABC News and CBS News. The night before final layoffs on October 31 last year, the union staged a ghoulish Halloween party in the factory parking lot and the cemetery across the street.

But there's more than guerrilla theater going on here. Last year when OCAW filed its suit against AHP, observers gave it little chance to get past the early stages. But the discovery process produced reams of documents that buttressed OCAW's case. Observers now think both legal actions have a good chance of success.

More immediate financial assistance may be forthcoming. On March 4, a National Labor Relations Board administrative law judge ruled the company was guilty of eight unfair labor practices during the shutdown of Whitehall, including failure to bargain over the effects of the plant closing. The judge ruled each worker must soon receive at least two weeks back pay—and possibly much more.

To protect workers in the future, powerful Rep. Fortney "Pete" Stark (D-CA) has introduced legislation that would revoke tax breaks if the government found a company had shifted jobs from the mainland to Puerto Rico. Malloy and her co-workers are lobbying hard for the bill, and hearings are scheduled for this spring. A Senate version of the bill is expected later this year.

Puerto Ricans are more than slightly worried by the developments. With unemployment hovering around 20 percent, section 936 jobs are welcome. But even Professor Catala points out that if Puerto Rico's economic development mode is based on the U.S. tax code, it's shaky at best. "It's not so smart to be that dependent," he says.

But whatever happens, it's too late for some. Fifty-six-year-old Ted Field grew morose after losing his job of 35 years. "He began to sleep a lot more," says daughter Becci Mossey. He took drugs to calm his nerves, but in early February he died of a heart attack. "He'd never been sick," says Mossey. "I think losing his job killed him."

Former Whitehall workers hope to exact their measure of revenge. It once looked like a long shot, but for Gilbert, Smith and the others, it was all they had left. Now that the prospects for a courtroom victory look better, the former workers are feeling more confident. But any monies from a court victory are years off, and people like the Beleys have to put bread on the table tomorrow.

It's a fact of life GM workers, among others, will soon face themselves.

Kevin Kelly is a Chicago-based writer.

How and Why the American News Media Are Distorting Current Events—

Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media

by Martin A. Lee and Norman Solomon

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Martin A. Lee is the publisher of *Extra!*, the journal of FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting) and author of *Acid Dreams: The CIA, LSD and the Sixties Rebellion*. Norman Solomon, a FAIR advisory board member, is co-author of *Killing Our Own: The Disaster of America's Experience with Atomic Radiation*.

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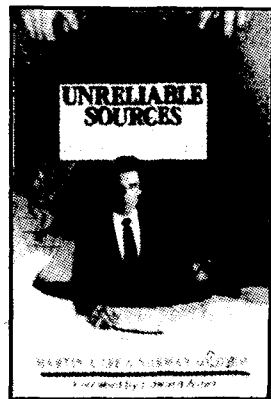
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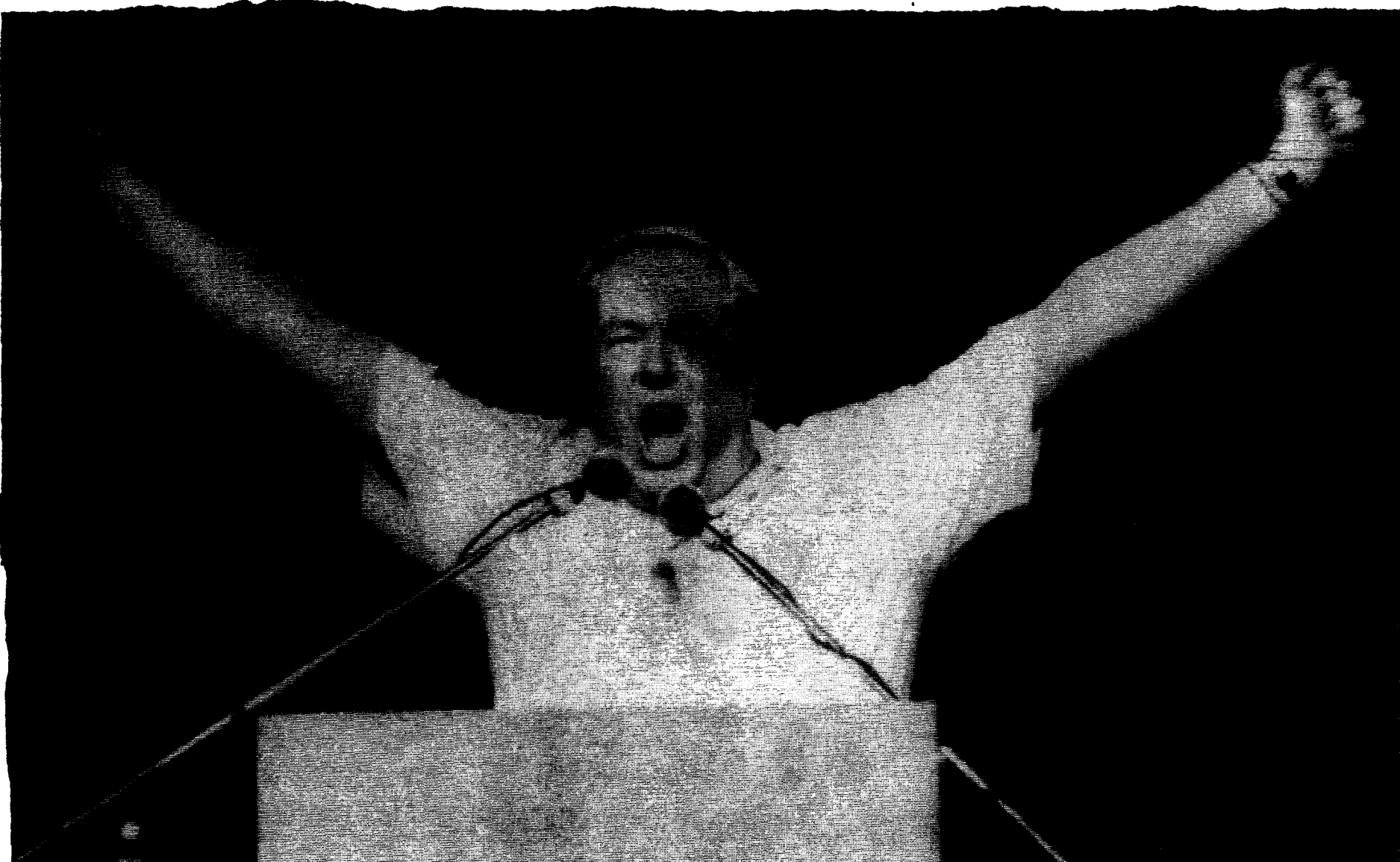
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National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen rewards a faithful follower with a prime spot in one of his strongest electoral areas.

By Denis MacShane

LYON, FRANCE

FORGET IVAN DEMJANJUK AND OTHER RELICS of the Nazi era now facing trial—or, in the case of the plucky freedom-loving Baltic states, being amnestied from ever facing trial. In France, they go one step further. An ex-Gestapo agent whose life has been spent in the service of the extreme right is poised to emerge as head of a key French regional government after the March 22 regional elections.

His name is Paul Malaguti, and he heads the ticket for the neo-Nazi National Front party which, on present opinion polls, could emerge as the largest party in the region

FRANCE

around Bourges in the center of France. As a 17-year-old, Malaguti enrolled as a Gestapo agent in 1944 in Cannes and stood guard while the Gestapo shot resistance fighters. One victim escaped and provided the vital witness evidence linking today's candidate with his Gestapo youth.

A faithful follower: Malaguti's defenders pooh-pooh his wartime Nazism as a youthful error, and France is, in any case, riddled with Nazi collaborators. But in Malaguti's case, his love affair with the extreme right is a lifelong fixation. He was imprisoned for participating in the white supremacist terrorist outfit that wanted to keep Algeria French and tried to assassinate French President Charles de Gaulle. Malaguti acted for a time as National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen's bodyguard and is one of the faithful who stayed close to the leader of France's rising racist party during its years in the wilderness. By placing Malaguti to head the list in one of his strongest electoral areas, Le Pen is not only rewarding a faithful follower but also thumbing his nose at all those who denounce the neo-Nazism of the National Front.

Le Pen is now cocky. His opinion poll support and the extent to which he is setting

Extreme rightists move ex-Nazi to political front

the political agenda even for French conservatives like former Prime Minister Jacques Chirac and former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, makes him feel he can slip an ex-Gestapo agent into power without too much of a fuss.

His gamble is not that risky. The most extraordinary aspect of the rise of Le Pen and the National Front is the extent to which French civil society, and especially the television and press, accept this raving Jew-baiter as a normal, if regrettably extreme right-wing, politician.

It is a problem beyond French borders. Writing in *In These Times*, there is no problem describing the National Front as "neo-Nazi," but in the European press generally there has been a marked shift to a respectable treatment of France's fascist party and its anti-Semitic leader. Three British newspapers, the *Financial Times*, the *Sunday Times* and the *Guardian*, have recently produced profile-interviews of Le Pen in which he has had gentler treatment than, say, a David Duke or even a Pat Buchanan.

Le Pen visited London recently and welcomed journalists in an exclusive suite at the Savoy Hotel, just like any other president-in-waiting. Yet, to attend Le Pen's meetings is to confront an anti-Semitism unheard in mainstream public discourse in Europe since the '30s.

Le Pen exhibits a steady turn of hate against those who "betrayed" France, ranging from Pierre Mendes France (Jewish), who gave Tunisia independence in 1954, to Laurent Fabius (Jewish), who is the French socialist leader most identified with anti-National Front politics. Outside the National Front meeting halls, Jew-baiting posters of

hooked-nose figures are on sale. Le Pen does not explicitly denounce someone as Jewish, he simply pauses dramatically in his speech as his lips curl around a Jewish name and waits for the jeers and hisses to emerge from his audience.

To journalists who come to sit at his feet, Le Pen dismisses such points with a quip: "Just because I like Wagner, it doesn't mean I'm anti-Semitic." But he finds it difficult to keep the beast under control. In 1990, he dismissed the Holocaust as a minor detail, and last year, his wordplay linking a Jewish minister's name to gas ovens popped out spontaneously at a televised meeting.

Swimming into the mainstream: Le Pen's advantage is that he speaks for more than just a lunatic fringe. When four people were killed in an Arab bombing outside a Jewish restaurant in Paris in 1980, the then-prime minister, Raymond Barre, hurried to the scene. He expressed deep regrets, all the more so as "one of the victims was French." The other three had French citizenship but were Jews, you see. In French, far more than in English or German, someone is identified in daily conversation as Jewish.

The French establishment, like its English equivalent, is happier with the Arab world, and the money to be made from it, and has never been at ease with the existence of Israel. The French diplomatic service has al-

Defenders of ex-Gestapo agent Paul Malaguti pooh-pooh his wartime Nazism as youthful error.

ways had a soft spot for the Palestine Liberation Organization and its leaders. Heads rolled recently when top diplomats allowed terrorist leader George Habash into France for medical treatment without informing ministers, but ever since de Gaulle's 1967 put down of the Jewish people and Israel—as a self-confident, domineering race—it has been acceptable to hide a deep-rooted anti-Semitism in France behind a fashionable enmity toward Israel.

French President François Mitterrand, on the other hand, has made no secret of his penchant for Israel. He is the only Western head of state to have made a state visit there, and, even while scornfully critical of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his Likud Party's policy, he has never hidden his admiration for Jewish cultural, intellectual and political traditions.

Another betrayer of his faith: For the Anglo-Saxon left intelligentsia worldwide, Mitterrand has been presented, with considerable justification, as another betrayer of the faith, a closet Thatcherite draped in the tatters of sold-out French socialism.

He is also hated by the European mainstream right, especially in England, because his rule in the '80s stopped a complete takeover of Europe by Reagan-Thatcher economic and social ideas. The mass nationalizations ordered by Mitterrand in 1981 were at odds with all "correct" economic thinking, and, although many turned out to be lemons, centrally-administered mixed economy France has turned out to be more successful than free-market privatized England in the past decade. English newspapers cannot stop printing articles about how much nicer, cleaner, more efficient, more go-ahead Paris and the rest of France is compared with London and England.

Even if much is exaggerated, and even if it is true that Mitterrand and the Socialists have by now exhausted themselves and are being consumed by corruptions and in-fighting, the comparative historical record shows

Continued on following page

IN THESE TIMES MARCH 18-24, 1992 9

National Front

Continued from preceding page
a France that has been well-governed with a reasonable economic balance sheet. In addition, Mitterrand pushed hard to place one of his top aides, Jacques Delors, as president of the European Commission in 1985, thus ensuring the primacy of French social democratic ideas in the construction of the inte-

grated European Community. And, as it was over the Mitterrand-Delors vision of "Social Europe" that former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher came to grief, Mitterrand's claim to have been a bulwark against the right in Europe is still further strengthened.

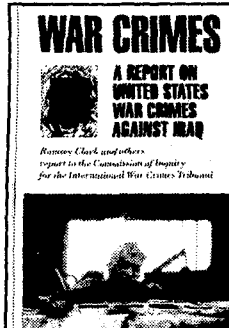
So the English, let alone the French right, have never come to terms with this Machiavel-
lian leader and have never been able to han-

dle his pro-Israel and pro-Jewish style. The turn to Le Pen as the only figure to tackle Mitterrand—not in the expectation of seeing Le Pen as president, but in the hope that he can humble the aging Socialist leader and provide space for the traditional right to move back to power—is thus logical and explains why Le Pen's anti-Semitism and his choice of a Gestapo agent as his political flag-bearer is not getting the kind of contemptuous drubbing it deserves from the French, let alone English political and media establishment.

In France itself, it is now the Catholic Church that is taking the lead in condemning Le Penism. The Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Jean Lustiger, is Jewish by birth, but the main denouncers of Le Pen have been provincial archbishops and bishops. For all the decline in religious attendance in France, the Catholic Church is still the biggest bloc in French

civil society with a sense of what is happening at the grass roots. It knows how dangerous post-modern Nazism can be for all social relations, and its leaders are speaking out before it is too late. Many of the French, however, prefer to be either disdainful of Le Pen or secretly to admire someone who is sticking it to the Arabs or to those other Semites, the Jews.

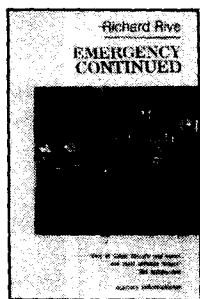
Denis MacShane is author of *International Labor and the Origins of the Cold War*, to be published later this year by Oxford University Press.



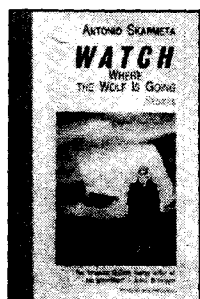
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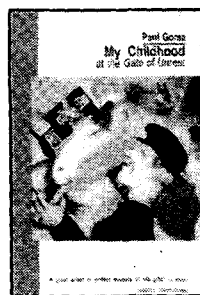
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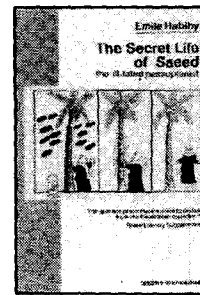
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By David R. Dye

MANAGUA

Ortega feels pull from FSLN's right and left



Daniel Ortega with brother, Humberto.

DANIEL ORTEGA IS AT A CROSSROADS. TWO years after his defeat in the 1990 elections, Ortega faces important leadership challenges for the first time as head of Nicaragua's Sandinista Front (FSLN). Controversies in the party in recent weeks herald the probable emergence of distinct "right" and "left" factions, raising the specter of a division, the first since the Sandinistas' guerrilla days in the '70s.

The issue is strategy. Since the Sandinistas' exit from power, Ortega has steered the FSLN along a zigzag course that has left many of his followers confused or discontented. Throughout, the ex-president has been a vocal champion of Nicaragua's union and popular forces, seeming to sanction violent opposition to President Violeta Chamorro's government when he felt that major parts of the revolutionary legacy were in jeopardy. But Ortega has reined in these groups when their vigorous tactics appeared to threaten the country's stability or to mar the image the FSLN wants to project as a loyal, democratic opposition willing to play by peaceful rules.

The groups now emerging on Ortega's flanks want the ex-president to define himself—in radically different directions. How Ortega handles his party's ideological identity crisis will have a large bearing on the future of the FSLN and its revolutionary legacy as well as on Ortega's desire to lead the Latin American left in the '90s.

Social-democrats surface: On one side, a new "center group" has called on the FSLN to declare itself squarely in favor of "stability." That means foregoing land seizures, strikes involving factory occupations and other forms of violent popular resistance to the neoliberal economic policies of the Chamorro government. Rafael Solis, the group's most visible spokesperson, insists that "there must not be another November 9 in Nicaragua," referring to the burning of the offices of Managua's mayor by enraged Sandinistas last year. The group consists of middle-class Sandinistas, some with substantial business interests, for whom stability is a key to personal well-being.

Beyond criticizing Ortega's defense of disruptive tactics, Solis defines his group's views as moderate and "social-democratic," the first time such a position has been openly advocated in the party. Within the FSLN, social-democracy is a right-wing point of view and Ortega is known to disagree with it. But the new group reportedly enjoys behind-the-scenes support from high-ranking Sandinista legislators, including Sergio Ramirez, the former vice president.

Though small at present, a hidden factor makes the center group's challenge to Ortega potentially dramatic. As a lawyer for the Sandinista Popular Army, Solis is widely viewed as a stalking-horse for army leader Gen. Humberto Ortega, Daniel's brother. A major Sandinista goal since the elections—asserting the right of the revolutionary army to remain intact as the armed forces of a post-revolutionary and decidedly capitalist state—has by this point largely been met. But army and party interests have begun to diverge, with potentially dangerous consequences.

Home honor: On January 14, Humberto Ortega, the nemesis of the "Yanquis" during the '80s contra war, shocked many Sandinistas

by pinning the army's most prestigious medal on outgoing U.S. military attaché Col. Dennis Quinn. Other holders of the decoration responded vocally. While some politely termed the general's move a political mistake, many called him a "traitor" and a "sellout" for having had truck with the former enemy.

The general's explanation of his decision was somewhat oblique. "At times," he said, "to make people understand things that are difficult, one has to use electroshock—very strong measures designed to get them to react." The army chief went on to indicate that he wants the Sandinistas and others to understand that "confrontation and polarization"—the stock in trade of Nicaragua's post-election politics—must give way, and quickly, so that "all the country's political actors harmonize for the sake of totally consolidating peace."

Over the last few months, right-wing forces in Nicaragua have waned, with the demobilization of most of the "recontras" in February bringing a perhaps temporary but longed-for peace to many rural areas. But challenges to stability remain—in the countryside, where violent seizures of farmland are common, and in the city, where labor actions often involve the use of force.

Instability dominated talk when U.S. Secretary of State James Baker made a lightning visit to Managua January 17. Sharply criticizing the Sandinista police for failing to enforce the law as ordered by the Chamorro government, Baker warned Nicaraguans that if they expect either national or foreign investors to put their money behind 1992's expected economic takeoff, "stability and security" in the country will have to improve.

Sandinista army sources have made it clear they are taking the message very seriously and that the army will act when needed to control violent conflict and protect the property rights of all Nicaragua's citizens. To that end, the army has deployed the "recompas"—Sandinista paramilitary forces organized late last year to counter the recontras, but whom the army now appears to fear

as potential champions of poor peasants in danger of losing their lands to larger landowners. Sandinista union leaders also see a warning directed at them.

The flip side of the general's message is even more startling to Sandinistas. Bereft of new sources of equipment and training since the collapse of the Soviet camp, the army is bidding to develop a "normal institutional relationship" with the U.S. military with an

NICARAGUA

eye toward an eventual request for assistance. Before the Pentagon responds favorably to this petition, it will extract a price from the general that may include a willingness to repress his political brethren.

The ex-president's reaction to the "center group" reflected the danger he sensed on his right. Ortega took to the radio to accuse the group of departing from the ideals of Sandino in a desire to accommodate the government. Though he avoided criticizing the army, Ortega stated bluntly that if this so-called center "preferred to be the rat's head of the government rather than the lion's tail of the Frente," its members "should seek another party—there are 21 in Nicaragua to choose from." Other party leaders immediately sought to soften Ortega's remarks to avoid the appearance of a serious rift.

The army's influence: If the army really is behind the center group, Ortega has reason to want to shore up support elsewhere in the party. But though his blast at the centrists was forceful, it failed to mollify another set of critics in the Front with different grievances. If the center group may be seen as an emerging party right, a "left" is also forming for whom Ortega's defense of lower-class Nicaraguans, far from being excessive, as the centrists claim, is not strong enough.

"I declare myself confused," said party veteran Silvio Prado. "The National Directorate [of the FSLN] appears to promote strikes at some moments, at others it terminates them." Prado is among many who criticize Ortega

How Daniel Ortega handles the Sandinistas' ideological identity crisis will have a large bearing on the future of the FSLN and its revolutionary legacy, as well as on Ortega's personal desire to lead the Latin American left in the '90s.

for not allowing the popular forces to fight their own battles and for subordinating their struggles to other interests of the party.

Together with other dissatisfied party members, Prado organized a forum in Managua to discuss "What Kind of Sandinista Front Do We Want?" Stretched over three evenings in February, the event marked the first time Sandinistas gathered outside established party channels to talk about basic issues, in particular, what their party is supposed to stand for.

For most of those attending, the identity crisis in the Sandinista ranks can be traced to the lack of a clear constituency. Union leader Jorge López: "We have irreconcilable class sectors in our midst, in a way different from when we were in power." People like López want the FSLN to regroup squarely around the country's popular forces—the workers, peasants, women's and youth groups that are bearing the brunt of the mass unemployment and impoverishment caused by current economic policies. For many, that means shedding middle-class elements like the "center group" whose interests lead them to seek accommodation with the Chamorro government.

Other grievances against the party leadership—and, implicitly, against Ortega—found a voice in the forum. Many blasted their leaders for a lack of ethical standards and a willingness to cover up corruption by officials of the former Sandinista government. And almost all were critical of the leadership's failure to follow through on Congress' mandates to give real decision-making power to lower-level party organs. "Nothing has changed since the Congress," said many, in effect blaming top leaders for the apathy affecting party ranks.

This popular and democratizing current in the FSLN is likely to be the more powerful challenge to the discredited "vanguardism" of the '80s. Rather than watering down the FSLN into a kind of tropical social-democracy as desired by the right, these Sandinistas are demanding the renewal of their party's revolutionary and utopian impulses. They insist that the FSLN go on being "socialist"—without having thought through clearly what terms like "socialism" and "revolution" might mean in the neoliberal '90s.


Look both ways: With the "right" and the "left" trying to extend their influence in the party ranks, Daniel Ortega is caught uncomfortably in the middle. At heart, the ex-president's sympathies probably lie with the left, which he has criticized only obliquely. Rather than embrace social-democracy, Ortega spends much time promoting alliances with more progressive Latin American groups such as Brazil's Workers Party. But he has also attempted to keep the right within the party and has moved slowly in democratizing the FSLN so as not to allow the more radical rank and file to crimp his freedom for political maneuver.

This balancing act now appears to be reaching its limit. Nicaragua's economic adjustment has begun to make the interests of the "haves" within the multi-class Sandinista Front diverge sharply from those of the "have nots." How much longer Ortega can keep the two together is an open question. If he doesn't soon jump in some direction, others may jump—out. ■

David R. Dye is *In These Times'* correspondent in Nicaragua.

AS THE WORLD BURNS

By W.K. Burke

 IN FEBRUARY 3, A TEAM OF NATIONAL Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) scientists held a press conference in Washington to warn that an ozone hole stretching from northern New England to northern Europe could form during the next two months. Three days later, the Senate voted 96-0 in favor of a resolution proposed by Sen. Albert Gore (D-TN) urging President Bush to accelerate the phaseout of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), the chemicals largely responsible for ozone depletion.

Within days, the White House announced a plan to speed the phaseout from the year 2000 to the end of 1995. It seemed that, finally, when faced with a bitter re-election campaign and a possible ozone hole over his vacation home in Kennebunkport, Maine, President Bush had acted quickly and decisively on an environmental issue.

But Bush's latest response to the ozone crisis falls far short of being the most our nation can do to stem ozone depletion. Environmentalists claim the administration's phaseout proposals contain loopholes that could allow production of some ozone-depleting chemicals well past the 1995 deadline.

The Bush phaseout "doesn't require industry to do anything more than they are already doing," says a congressional source. U.S. CFC production has dropped 40 percent in the last five years. Equipment for recycling the compounds is selling briskly, and many electronics companies have completely stopped using CFCs as solvents. "Nobody wants to be the last one off the sauce," says Dave Doniger, an attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

But the Bush phaseout requires only a 10 percent reduction in CFC production in the next year. In effect, Bush is encouraging industry to take one last round of profits from CFCs. Unfortunately, recent findings suggest that even the most ambitious CFC phaseout plans may not be enough to avert ecological disaster.

Going, going... Last month, the NASA team warned that the ozone layer over the Arctic and northern portions of Europe and North America could be depleted this spring by 1 percent each day. Their warning was prompted by the detection of large amounts of ozone-destroying chemicals in the upper reaches of the Arctic atmosphere.

Ozone is oxygen with an extra atom attached to each molecule. What is called the ozone layer is simply a small amount of ozone in the stratosphere, the region of the atmosphere from 10 to 30 miles above the Earth's surface. At the high, cold altitudes of the stratosphere, ozone is destroyed quickly, but it forms quickly as well.

So normally, the amount of ozone present stays relatively stable. This layer absorbs much of the sun's ultraviolet radiation.

An ozone hole over the Northern Hemisphere would expose unprecedented numbers of people to excessive amounts of ultraviolet radiation, which causes cataracts and skin cancer in humans. Large doses of ultraviolet radiation also hinder plant growth.

But the possibility of a short-term ozone hole over the Arctic was not the worst news of the month. "We already knew there was an ozone depletion of 4 or 5 percent over the Northern Hemisphere and that [this depletion] would probably double over the next decade," says Michael Oppenheimer, a scientist for the Environmental Defense Fund. "That's terrible news right there. But in addition, some scientists believe there is a potential for even higher depletion."

So far, the worst ozone depletion observed has taken place over Antarctica. At the pole, stratospheric clouds form during the frigid winters that encourage the formation of chlorine monoxide, a by-product of the breakdown of CFCs. A swirling winter wind system, known as the polar vortex, prevents the stratospheric clouds from dissipating. Chlorine monoxide accumulates within the clouds and attacks the stratospheric ozone during the brief periods of winter sunlight. This creates the ozone hole, a decline of up to 40 percent in the ozone layer, which ends as warmer weather returns and breaks up the southern polar vortex.

This winter, when the NASA-led team discovered record levels of chlorine monoxide over the Arctic, they called the press conference warning that a similar ozone hole could form over the Northern Hemisphere this year.

But that isn't the only bad news. While it is by no means certain that an ozone hole will form from Kennebunkport to Copenhagen this spring, other evidence of ozone depletion and its effects is accumulating at a frightening rate. Shortly after Bush presented his plan to the Senate, an article in *Scientific American* highlighted the research of Susan Solomon of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). In 1989, Solomon published a paper arguing that volcanic eruptions could increase ozone depletion by propelling sulfur compounds into the stratosphere that would increase current ozone depletion rates. Recent NASA data suggests Solomon could be right.

Since September, NASA's Upper Atmosphere Research Satellite observed that ozone levels in tropical skies affected by the eruption of the Philippines' Mt. Pinatubo were 10 percent lower than any previous tropical measurements. The satellite also

found regions of thinned ozone stretching north and south from the tropics. Solomon believes the clouds from Pinatubo could cause an ozone loss of more than 30 percent in tropical regions this spring.

"That is not a [conclusive] finding," says Dave Fahey, a NOAA scientist. Fahey cautioned that it is too soon to conclude that Pinatubo or any future volcanoes will accelerate ozone depletion at mid-latitudes. Still, these findings trouble other researchers, who note that humans loft large amounts of sulfur compounds into the atmosphere from coal-fired power plants. And Fahey warns that none of the recent findings are reassuring. "Nothing we saw reduces our concern," says Fahey. "It all increases our concern."

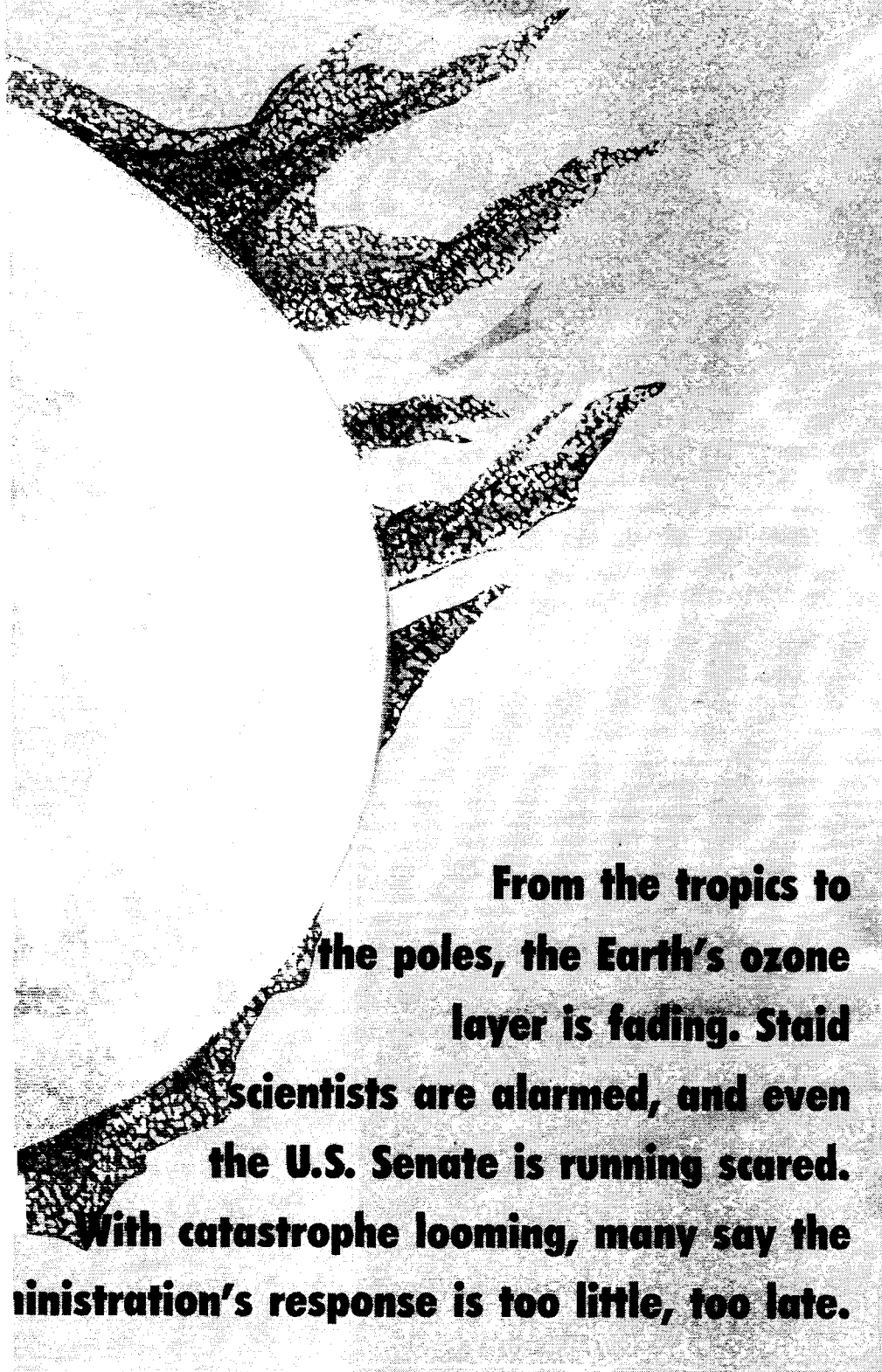
Dead stop: Even if all production of ozone-depleting chemicals were ended today, it still might not be enough to avert catastrophe. Since CFCs can linger in the strato-

sphere from 50 to 100 years before releasing all their chlorine atoms to take part in the ozone-depletion cycle, significant ozone depletion is likely to continue for at least a century no matter what actions are taken.

"The potential exists in the atmosphere over our heads to see much, much larger amounts of ozone depletion than we have yet predicted," says Joel Levy, a scientist who tracks research on the ozone layer, the Global Change Division of the Environmental Protection Agency's Atmospheric and Indoor Air Program. "The implication is that the chemistry that occurs [in the stratosphere] could have a much more dramatic effect than what has been predicted. That we'll have to wait and see."

How much harm can ozone loss cause? Without a stratospheric ozone layer, life on Earth would virtually disappear. EPA has estimated that current rates of ozone depletion will cause 200,000 deaths





From the tropics to the poles, the Earth's ozone layer is fading. Scientists are alarmed, and even the U.S. Senate is running scared. With catastrophe looming, many say the administration's response is too little, too late.

in the U.S. over the next 50 years. A November report by a United Nations panel also suggested that increased dosages of ultraviolet radiation harm human immune systems.

But the spectacular injuries to humans could prove the least harmful of ozone's effects. Ultraviolet radiation also damages plants. Phytoplankton, the tiny plants that form the base of the oceanic food web that sustains whales, fish and a great many people, suffer reduced growth rates under ozone-depleted skies. In late February, researchers confirmed an annual decline in phytoplankton growth rates of up to 4 percent in ocean areas under the Antarctic ozone hole. Aside from supporting much of the oceanic food chain, phytoplankton are also a major "carbon sink," they absorb carbon compounds from the atmosphere as part of their growth cycle—compounds that would otherwise add to the potential

for global warming from an increase in the Earth's greenhouse effect.

Burning history: The threat to the ozone layer from CFCs was first theorized in 1974 by Sherwood Rowland of the University of California at Irvine. Rowland has shown that after the CFCs break down in the upper atmosphere, each chlorine atom can destroy up to 100,000 ozone molecules.

First synthesized around 1930, CFCs were long believed to be a miracle industrial chemical. They did not react easily with other chemicals, were relatively non-toxic to humans and had a variety of uses. Prior to the invention of CFCs, the gases used in refrigeration were toxic and combustible, so CFCs made possible the widespread use of refrigerators and air conditioners. By the '70s, CFCs were also widely used as propellants for aerosol deodorants and other consumer spray products.

But the first revelations of the CFC threat

to the ozone layer prompted widespread concern. Comedienne Lily Tomlin wondered why we were sacrificing the ozone layer for the convenience of Pam, a non-stick cooking spray. The logic behind such complaints was hard to refute, and the U.S. banned the use of CFCs in aerosol sprays in 1978. Finding new refrigerants was more difficult, but Dupont and the other CFC manufacturers were making progress toward finding replacements by the end of the decade.

Then came Ronald Reagan's anti-environmental revolution. As soon as Anne Gorsuch Burford became EPA chief, CFC manufacturers felt it was safe to stop researching alternatives to ozone-depleting chemicals. The electronics and computer industries found new uses for CFCs as solvents. Dupont led a public relations campaign to suggest there was a great deal of scientific uncertainty as to whether CFCs could harm the atmosphere. There was some uncertainty, but only about how and when CFCs would damage the ozone layer, not whether they would damage it. But the CFC manufacturers succeeded in avoiding significant regulation of their product. CFC production peaked in 1986, 12 years after Rowland's first warning.

By that time, scientific instruments in Antarctica had been reporting for several years that as much as half the stratospheric ozone was vanishing over southern polar regions early each spring. But until the mid-'80s, these reports were disregarded by computer programs that assumed such low readings must be due to instrument error.

By 1987, however, a British team sampling the Antarctic atmosphere had conclusively linked the presence of CFCs to the ozone hole. Their report caused a worldwide sensation and resulted in quick diplomatic action. In September 1987, the U.S. joined the other industrialized democracies in signing the Montreal Protocol. That treaty called for a 50 percent reduction in CFC production by 1999. Three years later, the Montreal Protocol was changed to call for a total CFC phaseout by the year 2000. The Montreal Protocol process was a turning point in the history of global efforts to address environmental problems. It may also prove to have been too little, too late.

Decline and stall: Last April, the EPA estimated that the ozone layer's decline over populated regions was proceeding twice as fast as previously anticipated. Still the Bush administration resisted calls for action from environmental groups and EPA chief William Reilly. The White House seemed content to treat the decline of the ozone layer as a distant crisis that could be handled with long-term phaseouts of CFCs and modest lifestyle changes.

After EPA's April 1991 announcement, Sen. Gore twice tried to get the Senate to pass his resolution urging a quicker deadline for phasing out the production and use of ozone-depleting chemicals. Both times Republican senators, taking their marching orders from the White House, put a "hold" on the resolution. This is a parliamentary tactic that prevents debate or a vote. The Republicans last employed

this tactic to block Gore's resolution less than two months before the recent NASA press conference.

But, as Levy commented, "It seems to bring ozone-depletion home to people when it is directly over their heads." After the February 3 NASA press conference, Gore made sure his Republican colleagues knew he was willing to block all further Senate business until they debated and voted on his resolution. Apparently no one wanted to go on record in favor of ozone depletion. Gore's resolution passed unanimously.

But Bush's response to the Senate's call for action would still allow the worst ozone-depleting chemicals to be produced until Dec. 31, 1995. Bush's plan would also allow production of CFCs to continue at 15 percent of peak levels after the 1995 deadline.

American CFC manufacturers will also face less strict phaseout schedules than many of their foreign competitors. Germany, for example, has announced that it will end all CFC production by Jan. 1, 1995, and immediately stop producing Halons—bromine-based gases that also attack atmospheric ozone.

NRDC attorney Doniger says the Bush response is particularly weak in regard to Halons, which are used in fire extinguishers. "In the case of Halons, you could stop production now," Doniger says. Halons are produced to be stored for future use—large stockpiles of the chemicals exist already. The NRDC recently signed an agreement with two oil companies to fill their fire-protection equipment with Halons that are already waiting in storage tanks. But the Bush phaseout plan allows production of Halons until the end of 1995.

The most reckless loophole Bush proposed would allow the production of some CFCs for as long as there are any refrigeration devices or air-conditioning systems that require them. This provision is meant to allow for the repair and upkeep of existing machinery. "Our position is that we should be scavenging CFCs out of old equipment and recycling it to repair existing equipment," Doniger says. "Or we should be scrapping the older equipment and replacing it with more energy-efficient machinery that saves money for the purchaser anyway, by lowering fuel costs."

Business bias: Environmentalists attribute these loopholes to the Bush administration's ideological opposition to taking environmental stances that actually require an industry response. This bias is evident throughout the administration's proposal. This bias is made worse by sluggish EPA response to the laws that do get passed. The 1990 Clean Air Act required the EPA to issue regulations governing the recycling of CFCs by facilities that repair auto air conditioners. The auto-repair industry has begun embracing CFC recycling because of the rising cost of the chemicals—an increase partially attributable to a 1990 tax on CFCs that may be hiked this year.

Despite the industry's own progress, the EPA still has not issued guidelines for imple-

Continued on page 22

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GNU



The Pentagon speaks: America über alles

Just last week we noted on this page that "clarifying the question of empire ought to frame the post-Cold War debate," but that this discussion is so foreign to our recent history that no Democratic presidential contenders could comfortably espouse the idea that the United States should not continue its attempt to dominate the world with military power.

Only four days later, on March 8, a leaked Pentagon policy statement outlining the Defense Department's plan to assure we remain the world's only military superpower appeared in the press. The Pentagon statement explicitly advocates one-power world domination. The central policy goal it puts forward is to discourage other advanced industrial nations from "challenging our leadership or seeking to overturn the established political and economic order." In an amazingly impolitic admission, the Defense Department's statement argues that "we must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role."

The policy statement is an attempt to justify President Bush's "base force" proposal to sustain American armed forces at the 1.6-million-member level over the next five years—at an annual cost of \$240 billion. But it is much more than that. For the first time in what was planned as an official statement of policy, the administration admits that its goal is not a new multilateralism but unilateral control of the world. The document, of course, is couched in benevolent terms. The purpose of our control, it says, is to assure democracy and prevent nuclear proliferation. But this is to be achieved under the tutelage of a single superpower: the United States of America. Other nations can come along, but only as inferiors and only at our sufferance.

Not surprisingly, this bald statement of the administration's underlying principles set off alarms in many capitals around the world. One Western official whose government works closely with Washington told the *New York Times* that the Pentagon text "runs counter to the kind of multilateralism and commitment to the United Nations that [he] had expected to emerge after the Cold War." Other governments, he said, are worriedly asking, "Where do the rest of us

fit into this game plan?"

This, in turn, sent State Department and White House officials scurrying to exercise some damage control. One administration official is reported to have called the statement a "dumb report" that "in no way or shape represents U.S. policy." In Congress, Sen Robert Byrd (D-WV) said—ambiguously—that "in the long run it will be counterproductive to the very goal of world leadership it cherishes." Democratic presidential candidates said nothing. And the Pentagon spokesman disavowed parts of the statement and insisted that this was a preliminary draft that had circulated only at lower levels of the policy apparatus—though he did admit that the report's basic thrust mirrors the public statements of Defense Secretary Dick Cheney.

And, indeed, a memorandum dated February 18 that accompanied the statement indicated that it had been fully reviewed by Cheney's principal deputies and the military chiefs and that they had forwarded their comments to the drafters a month earlier, and that presumably these were incorporated in the report. In other words, it appears that the statement did in fact fully represent Cheney's, and presumably Bush's, views on the proper role of the United States in the post-Cold War world.

All of this is consistent with the way the Bush administration has acted. From the invasion of Panama to the war against Iraq, military force has been the main instrument of administration policy. International law has either been grossly violated, as it was in Panama, or unilateral pressure has been applied to act under the cover of the U.N., as was done in regard to Iraq. Meanwhile, while the Pentagon statement says its aim is to prevent the proliferation of arms throughout the world, the administration is busily promoting arms sales, going so far as to set up agencies and loans to accelerate the sale of munitions around the world (see editorial, Jan. 15).

Pathetically, with the cat out of the bag, Democratic presidential hopefuls are looking the other way while administration damage control experts are trying to stuff it back out of sight. And yet the Pentagon has given us a glimpse of George Bush's vision of America. It is his only true vision, or at least the only one he consistently supports: Fortress America, with nuclear missiles poised and pointing at every conceivable trouble spot. A military behemoth determined to prevent lesser nations from going their own way or determining their own destinies. The last great empire, whose influence is based on threats of destruction even while it blathers on about democracy.

LETTERS

PC

BARBARA EPSTEIN'S "POLITICAL CORRECTNESS" and Identity Politics" (JTT, Feb. 26) reminded me of why I continue to resubscribe to *In These Times*. I've taped the article to my office door, and have been passing out copies to interested friends, colleagues and students. Epstein is writing in the best tradition of the left: critical, compassionate, and taking the long view. An ounce of political wisdom like hers is more valuable than a ton of "political correctness."

Maurice Isserman
Clinton, N.Y.

Agran and Harkin

LARRY AGRAN'S ARTICLE, "PRIVATE PARTY" (JTT, Feb. 12.), makes an active Democrat like myself bow his head in shame. That this once-proud party could have sunk to a condition that is the absolute antithesis of democracy is a very sad commentary on the state of our beloved nation.

Even if Agran's program were not outstanding (and it certainly is the *most* outstanding of all), it is criminal for Ron Brown and the DNC to relegate him to political purgatory. If the DNC is truly afraid of the answers that Agran offers and, therefore, treats him the way Bush treats Duke, then they should admit that they, as the Republicans, are advocates of a corporate America. That they think that racism, unemployment, union busting and a crumbling infrastructure (to name a few of the benefits of a corporate state) are the wave of the future.

As a working-class Democrat, I supported Tom Harkin until I realized that he was never going to come forward with an acceptable health-care program. I supported him until I heard him bashing Japan and the Japanese—until he started bashing the Palestinians.

On the other hand, the very few times I have been able to hear Agran—the little Agran literature that I have seen has been forthright and without playing to the crowd. His interview on Seattle's PBS TV station on February 29 was a revelation. The Democratic National Committee has done the greatest disservice to members of the Democratic Party and to the American people as a whole.

Dick Moork
Seattle

Sustained yield

THE ARTICLE "BROWN BAGGING IT" BY JIM MCNEILL (JTT, Jan. 22) contains misinformation and misleading assumptions. The agreement between Stone Container and the Honduras government in the La Mosquitia areas involves a pine forest that has been extensively and repeatedly exploited between 1950 and 1970 by Nicaragua and others. This forest is not a virgin forest but a forest in decline. The exploitation of the forest in the past was without regard for management practices to sustain and increase the production of the forest. The people of the region were exploited much the same way migrant farm workers were in the past. The people were left with no training or skills to support themselves.

When the lumber companies left, there was no merchantable wood and no jobs. The forest was worth nothing to the people of La Mosquitia. The people reverted to the only thing they know, clearing and burning

the forest for cattle production and subsistence agriculture. These practices and the annual burning of the forest destroyed thousands of acres of forest every year. If left uncontrolled, the pine forest of Mosquitia will only be remembered by the old timers and will be seen only in pictures.

The agreement, when reviewed in the whole context and intent, contains far-reaching and innovative provisions to protect the forest and ensure its health, vigor and existence. The agreement states that the forest will be managed on a sustained-yield basis, no more can be cut than is grown. Harvesting practices will emphasize thinning rather than clearcuts, thus leaving a crown cover to prevent erosion. The residual trees will benefit from reduced competition and grow more vigorously into higher-value products.

Harvesting methods will be low-impact, labor-intensive operations using little if any equipment. These methods will provide the most jobs possible and the least damage to the soil. Stone Container has also committed to the training and establishment of the local people in their own logging and related forestry business. These skills and business will provide year-round employment that will make the people self-reliant.

Stone Container has committed to fire-control programs, infrastructure improvements and social programs for the area at their own cost. The government of Honduras promises in the agreement not to deny access to roads, power or other government facilities, nor will they charge unreasonable rates for these services.

The people and the forest of Honduras would be the primary recipients of the \$20 million annual benefits that the agreement and program would bring to Honduras. These benefits would not be based on the political whims of countries or the self-gratifying motives of agencies, rather they would have a solid economic and business base that would depend only on the world market and the entrepreneurship of the people.

Stone Container's commitment to the conservation and sensible use of the world's forest resource is evident in our Landowner Assistance Program and our project in Costa Rica. Stone provides assistance and management for nearly 2 million acres belonging to more than 3,800 landowners, providing income and conserving forest. Stone will plant 60,000 acres of deforested lands in Costa Rica, providing jobs while reforesting the land. Stone's project in Honduras can stop the decline of the forest and eventually increase the forest area and vigor.

Paul S. Howell
General Manager, International Market
Development, Stone Container Corp.
Jacksonville, Fla.

International campaign targets Stone Container

THE TASK FORCE ON MULTINATIONAL RESOURCE Corporations is joining with other environmental and human-rights organizations in opposing Chicago-based Stone Container Corporation's attempts to obtain rights to cut the remaining forests of Honduras. The contract Stone seeks would have devastating impacts upon the environment and the people of Honduras.

The Task Force is calling upon Stone Container to immediately halt all attempts to cut the forests of Honduras.

La Mosquitia region, which Stone would cut first, is the largest tract of virgin forest remaining in Latin America. Potentially more devastating, under the contract, Stone will be permitted to cut within a 150-mile radius of their mill, which is an area encompassing 82 percent of the entire country.

We are urging concerned citizens to write letters of protest to the president of Honduras and to the officers and shareholders of Stone Corporation. Information packets have been sent to 150 environmental and human-rights groups as well as to Stone's public shareholders and the media.

Many of these organizations are joining forces in the attempt to stop Stone's plans. The Rainforest Action Network (contact: Pam Wellner, [415] 398-4404) has initiated a letter-writing campaign and coordinated anti-contract advertisements in Honduran publications. RAN's efforts have been endorsed by many groups, including the Environmental Defense Fund, National Wildlife Federation, World Rainforest Movement, the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, the International Indian Treaty Council and Probe International.

Grass-roots groups are joining in the campaign, planning demonstrations in Chicago and other U.S. cities and in the United Kingdom. A boycott of Stone products will likely be implemented in the event that Stone proceeds with its plans.

Stone Container Corporation achieved its position as world leader in paper bag and cardboard production in a typical '80s junk-bond-funded expansion. The company now has dozens of subsidiaries and mills in the U.S. and around the world, including the dioxin-producing Celgar mill in British Columbia and industrial tree farms in Costa Rica. Stone is already under pressure in the U.S. and Canada from environmental groups and labor leaders. In Colorado, the corporation is battling environmentalists over its clearcutting of the last remaining old-growth stands in the Sand Bench forest, part of the San Juan National Forest. Stone's plan to turn the remaining forests of Honduras into

paper bags and boxes is another attempt to find new and cheap resources.

In addition to pulling out of Honduras, we call upon Stone Container to:

- stop cutting natural forest. There should be no further harvest of ancient or "old-growth" forest, in the U.S. or anywhere else.
- make recycling their top priority. There should be no development or exploitation of new resources for the production of disposable products such as Stone's bags and boxes.

• stop the replanting of cutover areas with non-native species, as the corporation is doing in Costa Rica.

• take immediate steps to eliminate the release of dioxins from its mills, including the Celgar mill in Castlegar, British Columbia.

Stone Container must be made to feel immediate and strong pressure from shareholders and the public to abandon its Honduran adventure. The Honduran legislature was supposed to vote on the Stone contract on February 3, but pressure from indigenous and environmental groups has shaken the resolve of the ruling National Party and forced a delay in the decision.

In response to this delay, Stone has launched a publicity campaign in Honduras to try to win support for their plans. A "supplementary agreement" designed to answer protestors' concerns is currently under discussion and will likely go before the Honduran congress in several weeks.

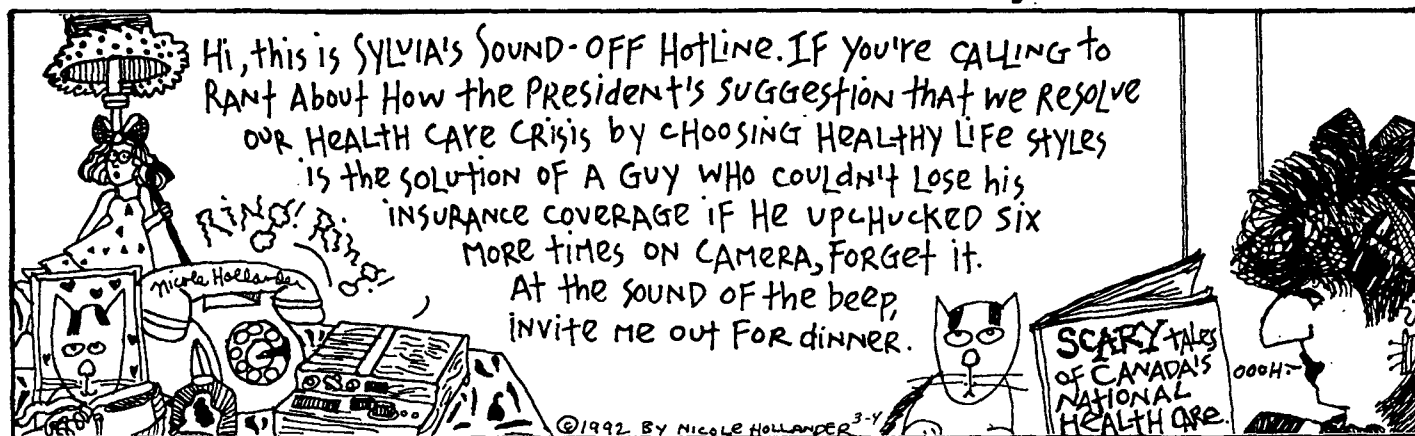
Task Force on Multinational
Resource Corporations
P.O. Box 95316
Seattle, WA 98145-2316

Jim McNeill replies: On February 28, the director of COHDEFOR, the Honduran forestry department, announced that the government had decided to reject the Stone contract. The announcement pleasantly surprised many Hondurans, who say this is one of the first times their government has resisted the advances of a U.S. multinational.

Like Stone's spurned contract, Paul S. Howell's letter fares poorly upon close examination. True, portions of La Mosquitia have been exploited by local farmers and lumber companies. But, as the Task Force on Multinational Resource Corporations notes, vast stretches of La Mosquitia remain virtually untouched. Even if Stone's "management practices" had spared the forest, the roads the company would have built to support its logging operations would almost certainly have brought a huge wave of settlers to the region.

As for Howell's contention that Stone would "protect the forest and ensure its health, vigor and existence," I'll let COHDEFOR's decision speak for me.

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander



© Tom Billings

It's all right, here comes the sun

By Lawrence Lack

DESPITE THE INCREDIBLE METAMORPHOSIS of a world in which the "evil empire" has disappeared, the U.S. presidential campaign continues to trade mostly in stale platitudes and the leftover ideas of the Cold War era. There is no excuse for this in what should be a year of visionary, reorienting political dialogue.

One message sadly missing from the election debate concerns the sun and the electrical and economic energy it can provide us now. According to solar engineers and developers and the government overseers who monitor their progress, a cost-effective solar power "grid" that would supply virtually all the world's energy needs and add millions of jobs to the world economy could be in place by the year 2000.

Blind to this reality, the candidates—and the rest of us as well—are freezing in the intellectual dark of this disintegrating pre-solar planet that is trapped in the politics of the past.

We're missing the fact that we can stop global warming cold and at the same time put an end to nuclear power and all the health and environmental hazards it entails. We can accomplish all this and a lot more by a switchover to solar energy that is ready to be utilized now.

Although it remains the poor stepchild of world energy policy, photovoltaic (sunlight-to-energy) technology has managed to thrive on near-starvation levels of research and development (R&D) funding. The efficiency of the photovoltaic cells that produce electricity from sunlight has increased far more rapidly than most experts and even many solar advocates had expected. Scores of companies around the world now market solar cells and panels. High-temperature solar furnaces that supply high-voltage power for industry are already in use in Europe and Japan, and solar-powered vehicles are also approaching commercial viability, crossing continents without resort to supplemental fuels and able to cruise for hours at 50 mph and faster.

Ken Zweibel, a spokesman for the photovoltaics division of the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, Colo., confirms these tidings. Zweibel says that given a R&D investment of \$1 billion per year—less than 1/250th of our current "defense" budget—solar cell technology "could supply nearly all world

With available technology, we can stop global warming and put an end to nuclear power.

energy needs by the end of this century at a cost per kilowatt that should be equal to or less than what our present sources of energy are costing us."

A changeover to this "solar economy" that Zweibel says could be in place in just eight years would defuse the global warming crisis and solve many more of the most threatening environmental problems that we face today—and in fact, most of these difficult problems are caused by the energy sources we are using now.

Providing as it does the dramatic potential for a power plant on every roof and car top, photovoltaic power will greatly reduce the need for centralized energy generation and power lines. A solar economy would thus offer tremendous increases in energy independence to individuals, families and neighborhoods.

With the cost of solar energy dropping steadily, in just a few years non-polluting solar power should be cheaper than the oil-coal-nuclear mess that we rely on now. In fact, because solar power will probably continue to drop in cost as it is improved and more widely adopted, the solar societies of the near future may offer political as well as electrical power to presently impoverished peoples and places. Compared with all other energy sources,

including so-called "alternatives" such as dams, biomass and wind, solar power is environmentally benign. The manufacture and disposal of solar cells and panels on a mass scale will have some negative environmental consequences, but these will be minimal compared with those caused by today's sources of electricity. Some technical problems remain but by far the most difficult problem now is how to obtain the R&D funding needed to bring the solar economy "on line."

Nations, companies and communities that understand this and make an early commitment to supporting the development of solar energy will be leaders in the worldwide turn to solar. Japanese corporations are hard at work on solar development. American solar developers—Boeing, for example—are making the mistake of reducing their commitment to solar research. And the largest solar utility in the U.S., Luz International of southern California, recently filed for bankruptcy due to inadequate funding (see *In These Times* editorial, Feb. 26).

If the U.S. is to play a major role in the immediate solar future, American political and business leaders must come to understand the need for investment in solar energy development.

Transfers for security: Funds from the still-bloated Pentagon budget should be diverted to solar research. American and global security would be far better served by a strong, productive U.S. economy fueled by solar energy than they are by our present reliance on weapons. Similarly, the U.S. Department of Energy, now largely given over to weapons work and to the promotion of nuclear power, should assist in the work of solar energy development.

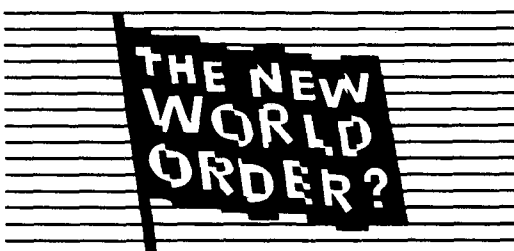
This is an issue conservatives as well as liberals should be attracted to since the building of a solar future would require government funding only to jump-start the private sector, which could then take charge of this strongly "supply-side" way of tackling today's economic malaise. A solar economy would be phenomenally productive, creating millions and perhaps hundreds of millions of jobs worldwide in the production, installation and maintenance of solar energy equipment (and also in dismantling and recycling the unneeded elements of our present electric power system).

Solar energy will be the major method of producing electricity in the 21st century, whether or not it gets special development assistance as the current century closes. But a serious move by the U.S. to develop solar energy now could advance the onset of a solar-powered world by a decade or more. The technology is available. We can use it now. All that is lacking is the will.

Needed: a candidate: We must also hope that at least some of those seeking the presidency and other offices will come to understand that solar energy is no longer a dream for the distant future but a practical goal that can be implemented now.

Hope is pretty hard to justify these days, given the terminal entropy that seems to have taken over our political system as we yammer on mindlessly about a New World Order. But perhaps the immense potential of this alternative will somehow find its way into the campaign.

Lawrence Lack is a freelance writer living in Los Ojos, N.M.



Speakers: Maria Elena Alves • Stanley Aronowitz • Bogdan Denitch • Boris Kagarlisky • L. A. Kauffman • Ernest Mandel • Jo-Ann Mort • Joseph S. Murphy • Major Owens • Frances Fox Piven • Daniel Singer • Cornel West • Ellen Willis ... & more!

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By Steven Soifer

How to tackle the issue of national health care



Bush era to bring federal class action lawsuits, a state-by-state strategy, if possible, would make the most sense. At least eight states have favorable language in their constitutions that could serve as the basis for a suit. A class action lawsuit can also be a great organizing strategy, and this is especially true on an issue like national health care.

Politically, the timing couldn't be better. One goal of the national health-care campaign would be to force the Democratic Party in 1992 or 1996 to adopt single-payer national health insurance as their top domestic issue, making it a central theme of the party's congressional and presidential campaigns. Single-payer national health insurance continues to be a major source of political credibility for Canada's New Democratic Party, and it could be a key to the revival of the Democratic Party in the U.S.

Perhaps no other issue has greater potential to unite low- and middle-income people than national health care. One of the tragic consequences of the Reagan-Bush years is that middle-income people have more often than not aligned themselves with the upper class against the poor, having been convinced that to do so served their self-interest. A single-payer national health insurance campaign affords progressives the opportunity to help realign the electorate so that poor people and the middle class are once again political allies. If enough grassroots pressure can be brought to bear on the local level, and if enough state governments adopt a Canadian-style system, single-payer national health insurance could become a reality in the U.S. by the year 2000. ■

Steven Soifer is an assistant professor of planned social change at the University of Washington's School of Social Work, Seattle.

would be generated to move a single-payer national health insurance plan through Congress. This scenario parallels the evolution of Canada's single-payer health-care system.

Join the party: Another course of action is to participate in Democratic Party pre-

to the party's district, county, state and national platforms. Educating and lobbying delegates to state conventions to take up the banner of a single-payer system would strengthen this effort. Candidates running for national office should be asked to pledge their support for a single-payer health-care plan. Support for candidates would be contingent on their agreement to such a plan. A clear focus on single-payer national health insurance could force Democratic candidates in the 1992, 1994 and 1996 elections to take a stand on the issue.

Push the courts: A final course of action involves the courts. Class action lawsuits could be filed in states whose constitutions contain enabling or protective language with regard to the health and well-being of its citizens. For the most part, the federal government has delegated to the states the responsibility to provide for the care of its citizens.

Since it is very difficult in the Reagan-

Perhaps no other issue has greater potential to unite low- and middle-income people than national health care.

cinct and district organizations, as well as caucuses in states where they exist, in order to push for a single-payer health-care plan. The goal would be to get this issue added

By Steven Soifer

HEALTH CARE VERY WELL MAY BE THE dominant domestic issue of the '90s. Polls show that an overwhelming majority of Americans favor national health insurance. Almost half support a Canadian-style system. Given public sentiment, progressives in this country have a unique opportunity to shape the course of the health-care debate in the next decade.

Senior groups, labor unions, religious organizations, health-care groups, social workers, community organizations and leftists are working for national health insurance at the state and national levels. Citizen Action, a 2.5 million-member citizen organization, in conjunction with 43 state health-care coalitions, has advocated state-level, single-payer health-care systems. Citizen Action has helped introduce such legislation in several of the 18 states whose legislatures are considering a Canadian-type health-insurance program.

Despite all this activity, Congress has so far failed to respond to the country's growing health-care crisis. Something dramatic needs to be done to break the political impasse and act as a "trigger event" to launch a grass-roots movement for national health care in the U.S., which in turn could reinvigorate the left in this country. To that end, I propose immediate formation of a national coalition to coordinate introduction of Canadian-style health-care plans before the voters of as many states as possible through the initiative process. (Twenty-one states have binding initiatives and one has an advisory initiative.)

This strategy could help build a movement for single-payer national health insurance in this country. If the health-care initiatives won in even a few states, pressure

By Muhammad Hallaj

THE ISSUE OF ISRAELI-JEWISH SETTLEMENTS in the occupied Palestinian territories is normally discussed in statistical terms (how much land confiscated, how many settlements and settlers) or in terms of its impact on the peace process. These are important aspects of the issue, but they tell only a part of the story. These numbers can't convey a very serious aspect of the settlement issue that is rarely considered. Jewish settlement in the Occupied Territories has led to the establishment of a system of apartheid in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The most recent U.S. State Department report on human rights paints a clear picture of Israeli apartheid. One does not need to read between the lines to discover that, for all intents and purposes, a system of apartheid is now in place in the Israeli occupied Palestinian territories. "Israeli settlers in the territories [about 5 percent of the Palestinian and Jewish population of the territories, exclusive of Jerusalem]," says the report, "are subject to Israeli law, which generally treats them more favorably than Palestinians are treated under military occupation law and administration."

Here you have the essence of apartheid. Two systems of law govern a territory, creating a favored minority and a majority underclass that suffers legally-instituted and sanctioned discrimination of various sorts.

Policy equals apartheid in Occupied Territories

The State Department's report gives examples. Here are a few:

- "Economic policies," states the report, "often discriminate in favor of Israeli interests and settlers in the territories."

- "Sentences given to Israelis for killing Palestinians are generally much lighter than sentences handed down to Palestinians convicted of killing either Israelis or Palestinians."

- "In 1991, international, Israeli and Palestinian human-rights groups published detailed credible reports of torture, abuse and mistreatment of Palestinian detainees in prisons and detention centers." (There are no such reports of torture and abuse of Jewish prisoners.)

- Palestinians are deported. No Jew is ever deported.

- "Palestinians accused of security offenses are tried in Israeli military courts. ... Israeli settlers in the Occupied Territories accused of security and ordinary criminal offenses are tried in the nearest Israeli district court under Israeli law. These courts are presided over by civilian judges."

- Homes of Palestinians suspected of security offenses are demolished or sealed

"before a suspect is brought to trial. ... This type of house demolition or sealing is enforced only against Arab residents in the Occupied Territories."

- "Arabic translations of news stories related to the uprising, which had previously appeared in the Hebrew-language Israeli press, were routinely censored from the Arabic press."

- Arabs have often been placed under curfews, while Jewish settlers "roamed freely."

Two systems of law create a favored minority and a majority underclass that suffers legally-instituted discrimination.

- "Israeli agriculture and manufacturing are protected against Palestinian competition from the territories, whereas all markets in the territories are in principle open to Israelis."

Israeli settlers are immune from many other forms of punishments and restrictions to which the Palestinians are subject, including restriction on movement and travel, detention without charge or trial, closure of schools and universities and many others. In brief, as the State Department report puts it, there is a "dual system of governance applied to Palestinians and Israelis" in the Occupied Territories. Under this dual system of governance, "Palestinians—both Moslem and Christian—are treated less favorably than Israeli settlers on a broad range of issues, including equality before the law, the right of residence, freedom of movement, sale of crops and goods, land and water use and access to health and social services."

If anything, the State Department's report on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in the Occupied Territories is lenient. Yet, it reveals enough to lead to the unmistakable conclusion that Israel has instituted and today administers a system of apartheid in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. By law, the executive branch of government is required to track the state of human rights around the world in order to take it into account as it charts U.S. policy toward other countries. Congress needs to consider this as it ponders Israel's request for \$10 billion in American loan guarantees to absorb Jewish immigrants. ■

Muhammad Hallaj is director of the Washington-based Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine.

Girls Lean Back Everywhere: The Law of Obscenity and the Assault on Genius

By Edward de Grazia
Random House
814 pp., \$30.00

The First Amendment Book: Celebrating 200 Years of Freedom of the Press

By Robert J. Wagman
Pharos Books
265 pp., \$6.95

By Ken Takata

IT IS 1954. THE PUBLISHER SAMUEL ROTH has just printed volume 1, number 3 of *American Aphrodite*. In that issue appears an excerpt from an unpublished manuscript, *Venus and Tannhauser*, written by Aubrey Beardsley in the 1890s, a work which Edmund Wilson once described as "a remarkable unfinished romance."

...Adolphe sniffed as never a man did around the skirts of Venus. After the first charming interchange of affectionate delicacies was over, the unicorn lay down upon his side, and closing his eyes, beat his stomach wildly with the mark of manhood!

Venus caught that stunning member in her hands and lay her cheek along it; but few touches were wanted to consummate the creature's pleasure. The Queen bared her left elbow, and with the soft underneath of it made amazing movements horizontally upon the tightly strung instrument. When the melody began to flow, the unicorn offered up an astonishing vocal accompaniment. Tannhauser was amused to learn that the etiquette of the Venusberg compelled everybody to await the outburst of those venereal sounds before they could sit down to dejeuner.

Adolphe had been quite profuse that morning.

Venus knelt down where it had fallen, and lapped her little apertif!

It is now, of course, 1992, but were this a century or even 35 years ago, the publishers of *In These Times* could easily have been prosecuted and jailed under the provisions of the Comstock Law (enacted in 1873 and still on the books) for printing and mailing an "obscene" publication (that is, in fact, what happened to Samuel Roth, who went to jail for five years).

That is to say, Anthony Comstock, special agent of the U.S. Post Office, could have inspected this issue with the above text, determined whether there was "in it anything of a lewd, lascivious and obscene tendency, calculated to corrupt and debauch the mind and morals.," and then taken appropriate action. Under his 43-year tenure, the statute and the power of his office were not idle threats; he claimed to have successfully convicted more than 3,600 people.

One of those was Ida Craddock,

In the realm of the censors: twisting on the slippery slope

who, at the turn of the century, circulated and sold booklets containing advice for the bride and bridegroom-to-be. And it is with her that Edward de Grazia starts the first chapter of his latest book, *Girls Lean Back Everywhere: The Law of Obscenity and the Assault on Genius*.

Law and morality: On the most direct level, the book is a history of literature and censorship in the U.S. But it is also a decidedly partisan account in which de Grazia outlines the story's heroes and villains. And at the heart of this account is the fundamental question: what is obscene, how do we prove it, and what, ultimately, do we do about it? It is, as Steven Shiffrin has written, one of the "great questions of political theory" because it concerns "the relationship between law and morals and the appropriate role of the state in a democratic society."

But it is one question that has never found a satisfactory answer. And, in general, obscenity is one subject that the courts have treated mostly with a vagueness and caution that has sometimes bordered on the absurd.

In 1873, the Comstock Law begged the issue by describing obscenity with a series of equally vague adjectives: "lewd, lascivious, indecent, filthy or vile." In the landmark 1934 case, *U.S. vs. One Book Entitled "Ulysses"*, John Woolsey wrote that obscene material must lead a normal person with "average sexual instincts" to "sexually impure and lustful thoughts." The problem, of course, is in determining what constitutes a normal person and what the difference between a pure and impure sexual thought is. This inability to define obscenity found its most explicit voice in 1964 when Justice Potter Stewart simply admitted, "I know it when I see it."

This vague double-talk would be almost comical were it not for the fact that the characters caught in obscenity laws are and were real flesh and blood. Ida Craddock was sentenced to state prison for three months. And on the day the federal judge was to deliver the sentence, Ida Craddock committed suicide, stating her reasons: "I am taking my life because a judge at the instigation of Anthony Comstock, has declared me guilty of a crime I did not commit—the circulation of obscene literature."

The post de resistance: The centerpiece of de Grazia's book is his discussion of the landmark 1957 censorship case, *Roth vs. U.S.* The case's immediate contestants were (1) Samuel Roth, a publisher of the excerpt above and sexually explicit

literature (i.e., a pirated edition of *Ulysses*, *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, etc.) and (2) a federal jury in New York which succeeded in convicting Roth of sending obscene materials (*American Aphrodite*) through the postal system and, therefore, of violating the Comstock Law. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court. There Roth's attorney made the tactical mistake of asking the Court to determine not whether the material Roth sent was obscene but whether the postal regulation was unconstitutional, that is, whether the postal system had the right to censor obscene material.

In the Supreme Court, Justices William Douglas and Hugo Black (and, to a lesser extent, John Marshall Harlan II) formed a coalition openly against censorship and the Comstock Law. Burton Clark and Charles Whitaker could see nothing unconstitutional about the regulation. Of the rest, Felix Frankfurter held to a strict doctrine of judicial restraint, which made him wary of overturning the 84-year-old law. Chief Justice Earl Warren had a record of judicial activism but also had great personal reservations about sexually explicit material. And in the center was William Brennan Jr., then a freshman justice. Ultimately, the court decided by a majority of 6-to-3 to uphold Roth's conviction (he was sentenced to five years, which he served). Among those who voted in favor was Brennan.

Robert J. Wagman in *The First Amendment Book*, interpreted Brennan's role in *Roth vs. U.S.* as a vote for censorship. But de Grazia speculates in *Girls Lean Back Everywhere* that Brennan's role in *Roth vs. U.S.* was actually and ultimately a strike against censorship. To advance his argument, he shows how Brennan's vote to uphold the conviction mattered less than the majority opinion which he wrote. In that opinion, he stated that obscene materials did not have First Amendment protections and could be censored. But he insisted that obscene material had to pass the following definition.

One, by "applying contemporary community standards," the material "as a whole" had to be found to appeal to the "prurient interests" of the "average person." And that, two, by definition, obscene material had to be "utterly without social importance" because "all ideas having even the slightest redeeming social importance—unorthodox ideas, controversial ideas, even ideas hateful to the prevailing climate of opinion" are protected under the First Amendment.

Accounts of censorship have usu-

ally focused on the first part of Brennan's definition, which on the surface sounds as vague and useless as Potter Stewart's. (What, after all, is a contemporary community standard or an average person?) But what de Grazia argues is that it is the second section of Brennan's def-

CENSORSHIP

inition that contains the most important information. This is the part which insists that obscenity has no social importance and which therefore implies that anything having social importance cannot be obscene.

This is the section that actually undermined the government's ability to censor because if even one person were to state that a book or text had social importance, the material could not be censored under the strict application of Brennan's opinion. De Grazia goes so far as to speculate that Brennan decided to vote with the majority because (1) doing so gave him the opportunity to write an opinion that could be used to limit censorship and (2) voting to overturn the conviction would not have accomplished this—Roth would still have lost by 5-4.

Change in the wind: This was, of course, not the only example of the way the Supreme Court's internal politics profoundly affected its handling of obscenity cases. As Robert Wagman notes, Chief Justice Warren Burger, as the court's administrative head from 1971 to 1973, successfully kept all but one obscenity case from reaching the Supreme Court until President Nixon could nominate his own conservative justices. When

This vague double-talk would be almost comical were it not for the fact that the characters caught in obscenity laws are and were real flesh and blood.

Nixon finally appointed Lewis Powell and William Rehnquist to replace Harlan and Black, two of the court's most vocal opponents of censorship, there was a big swing. On June 21, 1973, five separate decisions on obscenity and censorship cases were delivered. And in every case, the court upheld the right to censor by a vote of 5-4. In Wagman's words, these five decisions were of great importance because what they "did was completely reverse the burden of proof in obscenity cases. Previously, a prosecutor had to prove that a work was utterly without redeeming social value. Now it was up to the defense to prove that the work had 'serious' literary, artistic, political or scientific value."

The Burger court also decided that a state could apply local standards in censoring material and that the Supreme Court recognized that censorship standards could differ from region to region.

Yet each instance of censorship has unpredictable ramifications: In 1915, D.W. Griffith produced *The Birth of a Nation*, a film of great importance in the histories of both cinema and censorship. The film attracted widespread censorship because its controversial subject matter was the glorification of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Specifically, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) vigorously tried to have the film banned wherever it could. Partly as a result of their efforts, the film was banned in Ohio by the governor.

The most striking aspect of the history of censorship is how unpredictable it is, how imprecise obscenity definitions are and how its major issues are never resolved. This can be gleaned from both de Grazia's and Wagman's books, as well as from recent headlines.

It has now been three years since Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) first voiced his opinions of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Robert Mapplethorpe exhibit the NEA funded (for \$30,000). And yet, the issue is far from over, as anyone can see by the recent firing of NEA head John Frohnmayer and the Republican presidential primary in the state of Georgia. In one corner, we had Pat Buchanan, blaming George Bush for making taxpayers sponsor pornography. And in the other, we had George Bush, flatly denying that he fired Frohnmayer because of pressure from Buchanan and other conservatives. In the middle, of course, is the NEA, which is now doing its best to make sure it does not offend anybody.

The problem, of course, is that no one, neither the court nor Congress nor the president, has been able to explain to either the NEA or the American public exactly what obscenity is.

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Speaking Frankly: What's Wrong with the Democrats and How to Fix It

By Barney Frank
Times Books, 164 pp., \$18

By Ken Brociner

IN RECENT YEARS, FRUSTRATION OVER the Democratic Party's consistent inability to recapture the White House has been building to a boiling point. As a consequence, party faithful and critics alike have come forth with countless books, memos and speeches, all claiming to uncover the political formula needed to defeat George Bush in November.

One of the most perceptive of these efforts is Massachusetts Con-

DEMS

gressman Barney Frank's new book, *Speaking Frankly: What's Wrong with the Democrats and How to Fix It*.

Frank's analysis presents a somewhat curious dilemma. On the one hand, he persuasively argues that for the Democrats to win back the presidency, a sharp ideological turn toward the right is not only unnecessary but would actually be counterproductive.

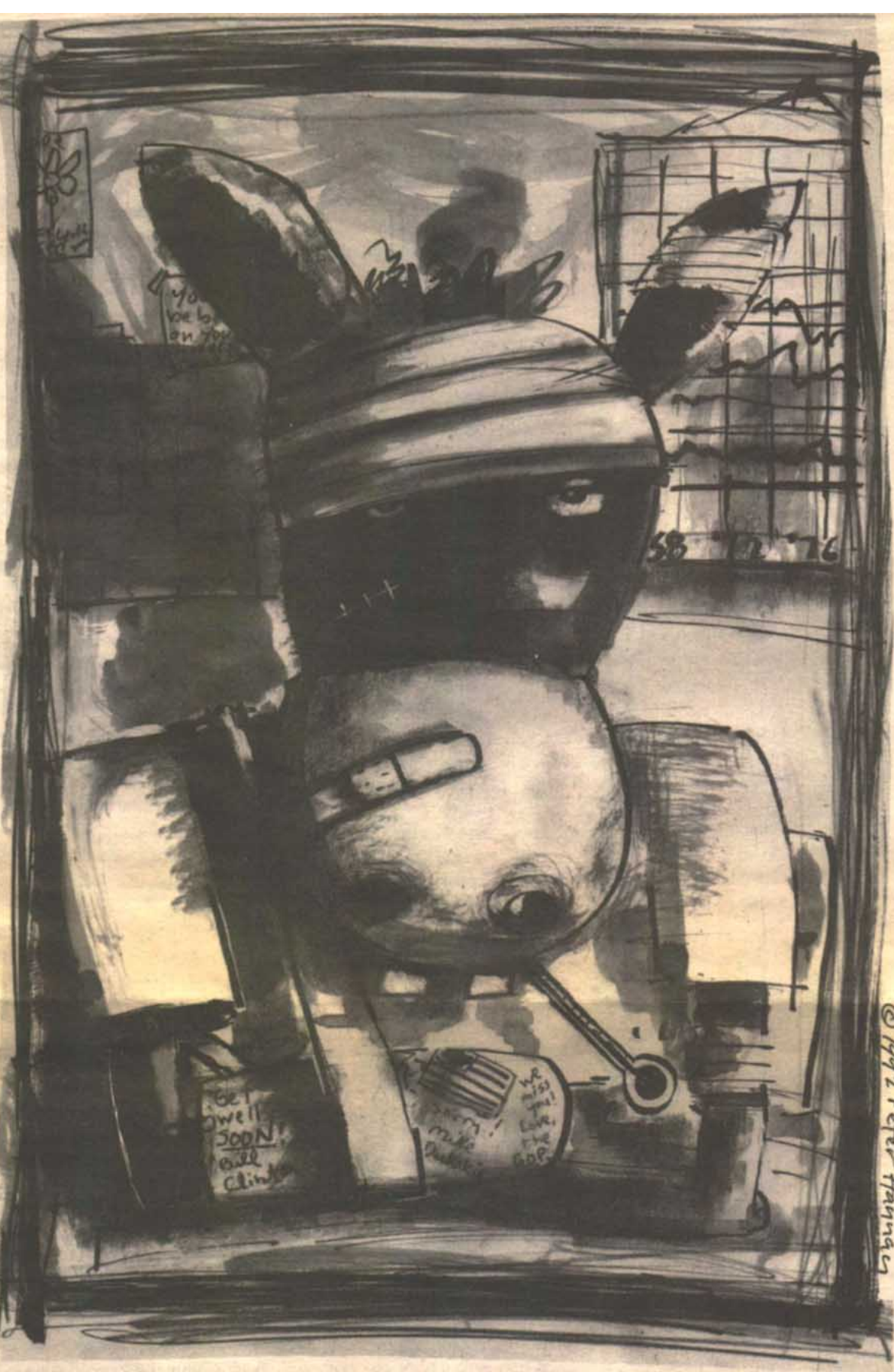
On the other hand, however, Frank's views about what is "wrong" with the Democratic Party are guaranteed to raise more than a few hackles in left and progressive circles. Essentially, Frank believes that the main reason the Democrats continue to lose the presidency is that the party's left wing has long exerted an undue and harmful influence on Democratic presidential candidates—both during the primaries and in the months preceding the general election.

Polls apart: Before examining this part of Frank's argument, let's first look at the "good news" portion of *Speaking Frankly*. By pointing to the Democrats' continuing success in elections at every level below the presidency, Frank concludes that the majority of Americans are in basic agreement with the party's positions on most issues. He buttresses this claim by asserting that, for quite some time now, most polling data has supported this view.

So then, why have the Democrats lost five of the last six presidential elections? According to Frank, it is because "elections for the presidency ... turn much more on values" and because the Republicans have succeeded in portraying the Democrats as being "unpatriotic, skeptical of the work ethic and soft on crime." Frank then proceeds to offer some valuable suggestions about how to discuss and frame these value-laden issues more successfully.

While it is true that the "we-do-well-on-the-issues-but-lose-on-the-values" analysis is hardly original, Frank's discussion contains much that is fresh. Those seeking a better understanding of this political paradox are advised to check out Frank's perspective.

Now for the "bad news." From the



Frank discussion of elusive presidential quest

very beginning of Frank's discussion, one thing is quite clear. *Speaking Frankly* was written primarily for those practitioners in the Democratic Party who, as Frank sees it, have allowed the left to dictate the terms of the political debate in a way that has played right into the hands of Republican strategists and media manipulators.

Readers of *In These Times* will almost feel as if they are eavesdropping as they listen in on Frank's recommendations. So much of his discussion/diatribe is about/against us. Yet, even though Frank isn't really speaking to us, we should carefully consider what he has to say.

As for Frank's claim that the left wing of the party has done more harm than good when it comes to actually winning presidential elections, recent history does seem to at least partially support his case. It would be a serious mistake to ignore or dismiss Frank's argument out of hand.

Frank also astutely describes the crux of the political dilemma that the Democratic Party has faced for 25 years. "Our dilemma," he writes, "is and has been how to run a presidential campaign that maximizes our appeal to the broader electorate without so alienating our party's left that its members cause our defeat—

by massive abstention; by supporting a third party; by being so disruptive as to make the party look incompetent; or by all of the above."

Frank astutely describes the crux of the political dilemma that the Democratic Party has faced for 25 years.

Hold your nose: Of course there are thousands of left organizers who, in fact, agree that all who oppose Bush's policies must present a united front next November. Yet, inevitably, all too many who share this view will, in the end, do little more to defeat Bush than simply hold their noses and vote for the Democratic candidate in November.

For those "progressives" who are pragmatic enough to become more directly involved in the upcoming campaign, Frank offers a compelling rationale. "We simply cannot be effective on behalf of those things that we care about if we continue to lose the single most important institution that has an effect on them—the presidency."

Frank's point should resonate throughout and across the many tendencies and factions of the left.

It is in the areas of underlying ideological and moral assumptions that Barney Frank falls flat on his face. When Frank (who opposed the war in Vietnam) discusses anti-war protesters, he starts out by correctly criticizing some of the overblown rhetoric used in the past. Unfortunately, he then gets carried away and in doing so sounds more like Jeanne Kirkpatrick bashing the "blame America first crowd" than a liberal Democrat.

Even more troubling is Frank's proposal that any savings generated by cutting the Pentagon's budget should be called "the victory dividend" rather than the standard "peace dividend." According to Frank, Democrats should use such rhetoric as a way of proudly proclaiming their patriotism as well as their delight that the U.S. policy of "defending the rest of the world" has triumphed.

By embracing such jingoistic rhetoric, Frank has, rather incredibly, ignored the fact that for many decades the U.S. has supported dozens of dictators on every continent, while intervening militarily time and again. It is highly unlikely that the Third World victims of such "benevolent" policies would share Frank's opinion (stated repeatedly in one form or another) that the U.S. has been "defending the rest of the world" all these years.

Similarly, on the domestic front, Frank offers a disappointingly shallow analysis of America's economic and social problems.

Given his fierce allegiance to liberal ideology, perhaps this should not be all that surprising. What does come as somewhat of a surprise, however, is how completely dismissive Frank is of those who offer a more fundamental critique of America's domestic and foreign policies.

Despite these flaws, *Speaking Frankly* contains much valuable advice about what the Democrats could do to end their long losing streak. For that reason alone, Frank's book should be read by everyone who is sick and tired of seeing a Republican in the White House. ■

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Future

Continued from page 24

grow (rather than gather) our veggies—lasted 15,000 to 30,000 years. The next great epoch, the Industrial Revolution, ran from roughly 1750 to the present. This is a radically shorter period. But even a mere 250 years was sufficient for the span of several generations to more or less graciously adapt to momentous and irreversible changes.

The Trans-Industrial Era, however, is utterly merciless and unforgiving in its demands on our adaptability. We have been given just one lousy generation to successfully (or not) turn our world upside-down, neatly equipped—or fatally burdened, however it turns out—with spiffy new contrivances from nuclear fission to greenhouse emissions to powerful personal computers for whom humans are a conspicuous nuisance. (Mine is insistent on this point.) The lousy generation in question is, without question, boomers.

This incredible telescoping of change is at the heart of our grasping at the chronological equivalent of straws: the beguilingly tidy decade. In the current, dislocating Trans-Industrial period, perhaps "era" is not too grand a term to slap on a measly few years, and perhaps dividing them into decades is as good a strategy as any for getting a handle on chaos.

A handle. A handle. Our kingdom for a handle.

And, of course, our kingdom is precisely the problem. Ruling the kingdom, or what's left of it, is increasingly the job of the 76 million born between 1946 and 1965. The "baby boom" will be unknown to history, if there is any. Historians of the future will know us as the "Trans-Industrial generation," the generation that did (or did not) get us from here to there.

But is there any such thing as an "us"? I was a weekend hippie. Perhaps you were a Young American for Freedom. Maybe we've both turned into Yuppies. Or Greens. Can

you stick a tidy label on 76 million people?

Perhaps not tidy, but, yes, you definitely can.

At least since the advent of mass communications and "pop" culture, and possibly before, entire generations have indeed evinced distinct personalities. Happily, for our discussion, the phenomenon coincides perfectly with the first decade most of us can remember as having been given a name: "The Gay '90s."

New frontiers: During the late 19th century, thanks to a plethora of new, high-tech media, the arts began to emerge from salon society and create the first stirrings of modern American pop culture, precursor to today's emerging global culture. Much of that culture concerned itself in one way or another in coping with the official closing in the 1890s of the American frontier and its effect on the national psyche. Pop phenomena were in full bloom by the "Roaring '20s," leaping out from stereoscopes, half-tone newspaper photographs, phonograph records, radio, film, dime novels, etc., and, as ever, the art we consumed spoke volumes about who we were. Particularly during the "Jazz Age," what might be called "jazz consciousness" presaged the "new frontier," the cacophonous, dislocating decades to come, their spirit nicely epitomized by changes that were already being wrought by the automobile.

This ostensibly straightforward technology was designed merely to get a person more conveniently from point A to point B. But by the '20s, we were already discovering point "X." Rural housewives could drive to town (soon it would be to work), forever changing the status of women. Their sons and daughters were freed for the first time in human history from the attentions of frowning chaperones, forever changing sexual mores. Their husbands would soon begin packing up the entire household and moving to Detroit or Los Angeles, forever changing the family, the city, the biosphere of the planet.

The great American migrations of

the 20th century were about to begin, but first there was a migration of consciousness and culture as we adjusted, with both dismay and enthusiasm, to the taming of the wilderness and the electrifying new technologies of the advanced Industrial Era.

However badly Europe had been "Frankensteined" by industrialized war, in America industrialization was still bright with promise. It would remain so even through the Depression, peaking in brilliance at the 1939 New York World's Fair. The prospect of change was still exhilarating, even euphoric, and the popular art of the period clearly reflected that generational attitude: "Prosperity (utopia!) is just around the corner!"

Further, in addition to such collective generational enthusiasms, we've seen collective sins. For example, the between-wars generation of Baldwin/Chamberlain and Coolidge/Hoover understandably believed war was evil and, with broad public support, pursued appeasement in the '30s, ensuring the onset of World War II. Vestigial facets of the Depression generation's distinctive character are still alive and well in the persons of most boomer parents, whose own generational disposition was even more definitively shaped by the '40s and the war their parents gave them.

Modern Prometheus: Here again, pop culture tells the tale most broadly: the "can do" stridency of World War II and Cold War propaganda, the cloying romanticism of songs and films. And, perhaps as it has done since the Renaissance, fine arts, the cultural equivalent of the canary in the coal mine, read the temperament of the times. As had Mary Shelley in the early 19th century and the Dadaists early in the 20th, existentialists, Abstract Expressionists and other fringe elements in the '40s and '50s worried overtly about Man and His Machine.

And, again, we saw collective sin. Having learned "the lessons of Munich," rather over well, the World War II generation swung violently away from isolationism, especially in

"war-untorn" America, and went on to intervene almost everywhere, bringing us Guatemala, Iran, Vietnam and "imperial overstretch." We're still at it, albeit on a smaller scale but with the same pompous, almost farcical arrogance. In the economy, complacency reigned supreme, ensuring the success of forces from OPEC to Japan, Inc. "Arrogant." "Complacent." These are generational as well as personal traits.

The frayed threads of our various antecedent generational personalities, with all their fantasies and phobias, were plied together for the warp and weft of the baby boom. Like their predecessors, boomers deserve their own set of adjectives (among which "arrogant" and "complacent" certainly figure). But the boomer cohort was and is unique. Our unprecedented size and unprecedented times have made us so.

Just as the human embryo is sometimes fancied as mimicking all the phases of evolution, from fish to amphibian to reptile to mammal, so the baby boom's nascent personality faithfully echoed all the frivolity and angst of 20th-century evolution. Davy Crockett fur caps and Hula Hoops, fads worthy of the '20s, gave way to an adolescent Great Depression in the form of unprecedented alienation, from Beatniks to "juvenile delinquency." This merged into a leftover '40s seige mentality, as young boomers saw America gloriously voyaging to far-off lands to save the world from the "Red menace," the self-evident equivalent of Nazism.

By the '60s, the youngest army ever fielded by the U.S. strode off to Vietnam in search of John Wayne. At this point, our generational adolescence erupted into (what passes for) adulthood, and the '60s took on their pivotal role.

Once more, the popular arts our generation consumed told the tale: a new, dark "anti-hero" realism in film; seminal, iconoclastic novels from Salinger to Ayn Rand—but most compelling of all, rock'n'roll. A generation raised in an affluence undreamt-of by their parents, the envy of the entire world, chose for its anthems a music derived from the African-American slave experience, the blues. Parents who detected jungle rhythms emanating from upstairs bedrooms can be forgiven for wondering "why"? It was dangerous. It was depressing. It was sexual. Typically, you couldn't understand the words, and when you could, you didn't like them. Especially this "Tambourine Man."

Death of illusion: The appeal of psychedelic drugs, from mild varieties of marijuana to industrial strength LSD, is little understood today, seen only as a precursor to the crack cocaine epidemic. It was and is much more. Against its broadest and most ambitious background, the psychedelic, "mind manifesting" agenda can be said to be based on (1) the failed promise of a personal deity, perhaps dating all the way back to the Black Death of the 14th

century and surely broken at Auschwitz, (2) the failed promise of heaven on Earth courtesy of miracle technologies, dating from Hiroshima if not World War I, and (3) the failed promise of communism, dating, at least for the erstwhile faithful in this country, from the exposure of Stalin. Boomers were the first generation to grow up with all three of these historic panaceas exposed as frauds.

And, with Vietnam and Watergate, the threat of a fourth failure entered the picture. The promise of democracy had been battered if not broken. "Consciousness expansion" via psychedelic drugs was seen as a long-overdue opportunity for Everyman to have direct, transcendental experience of the supernatural, the same desire that drove the Reformation in more technologically innocent times. "Experience," enlightened boomers, as prophets from John Lennon to Tim Leary promised, would lead Man to a New Age, during which His Machine would be abjured, or at least housebroken. Dr. Johnson's "triumph of hope over experience" has proved perennial.

The jaded chaos of the late 20th century amplified the appeal of such grand hopes and simultaneously ensured their disappointment. No matter. The psychedelic agenda changed generational consciousness even for those who never touched drugs for the very predictable reason that it affected the artists. Compare Frank Sinatra with Jimi Hendrix and contest me no further. Today, you cannot watch even a sober network newscast without being bombarded by psychedelic graphics freaked-out hippies would have cheered deliriously in the '60s. TV, music, films, books—even stand-up comedy—shaped by the transcendent urge, if not the realization in turn shaped, and still shape, a generation's character, just as popular culture has always done.

And, just as it has since the dawn of our era, the question of Man and His Machine, the central condun-drum of the Industrial Age, propelled it all toward either consciousness-expansion or good old anesthesia. It can be argued that anesthesia has clearly won the day. It is no accident that cocaine began life as a topical anesthetic favored by dentists.

Today, "reformed" leftists and cultural radicals write books decrying the drug plague unleashed by the pathetically naive Aquarian quest. The Aquarian quest had nothing to do with it. Fundamentalist religious cults flourish, amplified by television, and television itself has become the opiate of the masses. We currently support a seven-hour-per-day habit, "speedballed" with still newer technologies from the VCR and video games to the interactive CD and looming "virtual realities" which will make today's media look as quaint as an old Atwater-Kent hard-wired radio set. Sixties or no '60s, Trans-Industrial humans are simply stressed-out critters.

As if to prove the point, during the '80s, "socially liberal," well-educated

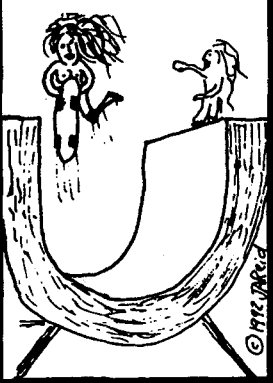
Skate Expectations

Pip discovers that Miss Havisham had secretly spent years perfecting her front-side grinds and rail-slide ollies...



And Coming Soon

Venus on the Half-pipe



Rough
cuts
BY
JA REID

boomers became major supporters of Ronald Reagan. We resurrected an especially virulent strain of '50s-style conspicuous consumption in the midst of child homelessness. We evinced an almost rabid contempt for the future in our disregard for the deficit, education, environment. All of which brings us back to "the vision thing," the near-term future and boomer management of the Trans-Industrial Era.

Backward looking: The '90s, presently a decade in quest of a label, will tell all. As noted, and like it or not, boomers will increasingly be at the wheel as we ride the bumpy and uncertain road of Trans-Industrialism. Now, it's always been the nature of our entire species, let alone any given generation, to steer our Changemobile by our collective rear-view mirror, even as our collective right foot turned into lead. As change accelerates, however, we more and more require a windshield-wide view of what may lay ahead. Lacking access to Nancy Reagan's astrologer, such a view can only be inferred by examining the evolving character of the boomer sensibility.

Arthur Schlesinger Jr., in his well-received book *The Cycles of American History*, asserted that Americans as adults tend to act out politically the ethos in which they were raised. He predicted that the '80s "rollback" mentality, echoing the Hoover and Eisenhower eras, will give sway under boomer administrations to the "anything's possible" *zeitgeist* we grew up with during the '60s. Those on the right regard this as wishful thinking at best and, at worst, an invitation to return to the scene of the crime for who knows what malicious result. A re-examined, reinvigorated New Left, New Age agenda?

What competing agenda is offered? George Bush perfectly captured the creative bankruptcy of conservatism during the 1988 campaign. "The vision thing" is a "thing" precisely because no one knows what it might possibly be. Bush sold himself like the proverbial bar of soap—all bubble and no bath. Now, as fortune would have it, this may be exactly the man for our times. Having rushed helter skelter around the planet doing good (not to elaborate on "well") since V-J Day, Americans may have done everyone a great favor by putting a bar of soap in the White House, and a prudent bar of soap at that, content with beating up on made-in-the-USA, tinpot dictators.

But what about the myriad domestic "make-it-or-break-it" questions of our time: the economy, education, environment, drugs and crime, etc.? Conservative bromides for these questions have typically involved some variation on the "thousand points of light" scam in conjunction with more prison cells. But well-educated and consequently socially liberal boomers are now coming into positions of authority well-positioned to address all these problems. And their infatuation with Reagan may indeed prove to have

been an aberration.

"Socially liberal" is beginning to take on special meaning as, for example, Republican women vote for pro-choice candidates, agitate for better day care, equal pay, etc. And "socially liberal" becomes utterly decisive in the era of glasnost and imperial decline. Reagan's boomers were conservative on defense and the economy. "Defense" is kaput. So is the economy. Tokyo is seen as more of a threat than Moscow.

A real peace dividend: Despite the aura of Pommard mustard and BMWs surrounding the affluent Yuppie mystique, boomers clearly do not live as well as their parents. When they do, it's increasingly because two people work where once only one did. The economy has not stretched to fit 76 million new workers with anything resembling comfort. Accordingly, as the economy continues to pinch and "defense spending" fades as a priority, the right may lose not only its social liberals but its cold warriors and "free marketeers." This shift in political capital may be the real "peace dividend."

The idea of collective economic action to solve collective economic problems will no longer be so easily debunked as "creeping socialism." Now that communism is in retreat around the world, it will increasingly be deemed OK to resume the creep toward socialism we ourselves began under Roosevelt and tried to continue under Johnson only to falter in the attempt to fight ... socialism. Naturally, we'll call it something else. So do the Hungarians.

Any genuine budgetary "peace dividend" may also play a role here. The assumption that defense spending has helped bankrupt the nation spurs the president to arms-reduction schemes. Simultaneously, however, the assumption that reducing defense spending will somehow free up resources for more profitable investments is ridiculed. Whatever the short-term bookkeeping, the fact remains that since Dec. 7, 1941, the U.S. economy has been on a protracted war footing. Switching at last to "peace footing" will sooner rather than later free up money for both deficit reduction and social spending. If this "peace dividend" is too small, expect taxes to rise. The anti-tax canon of recent years has been a colossal perversion of the national agenda. The deficit it created will be seen as one of the great irresponsibilities of history—yet another blunder for which boomers may have to answer when the future asks "why?"

In areas already deemed susceptible to a socially liberal sensibility, the demise of defense and what has shamefully passed in recent years for "fiscal conservatism" will open wide the floodgates in a number of areas. There will be an abundance of new taxes and government outlays in the '90s, making the "Great Society" programs of the Johnson years look like the peanuts Vietnam

turned them into. We need our own perestroika, and we will get it. As ever with boomers, demographics is destiny.

Health care: The older we get, the more the weight of the 76-million-pound gorilla will be felt in economic decision-making of all kinds—starting with health care. Rising costs leave us no alternative.

Industrial policy: Once the wide Rubicon of national health is crossed, it will be easier to tackle another key item on the economic agenda: a long-overdue national industrial policy. The "sink or swim" approach to the storms of Trans-Industrialism simply will not cut it in an economy that is *not* in a "recession." The American economy is experiencing an indefinite "slow bleed," thanks to dramatic and permanent worldwide changes. This leaves us no alternative but considered nurturance and improved regulation of commerce.

Education: Baby boomers waited longer than expected to have children, primarily for the economic reasons cited above. Now that more and more of us have children, we are clamoring for an educational system. The utterly appalling state of American education makes it easy

to get momentum going here. Like national health, once it *does* get going, once "competitiveness" becomes thoroughly redefined in terms of human resources, this movement will be impossible to stop. No alternative.

Environment: Boomers think they invented environmentalism on Earth Day in 1970. (We also invented sex, but no one is quite so sure of the date.) We will certainly *not* accept environmental apocalypse as some kind of half-assed substitute for nuclear Armageddon. Better a bang than a whimper. Government, corporations and the consumer will be pressured into accepting the exotic idea of cleaning up after themselves. No alternative.

Drugs and crime: Like love and marriage, these two problems go together and enjoy a causal relationship. Boomers have generational knowledge of drugs, certainly a better education than that provided in days past by "Assassin of Youth" anti-marijuana campaigns run on the generation currently in power. The present hysteria must end. If we wish to protect our children and ourselves, we'll have to legalize and control drugs, and the national debate

on this has at long last begun. No alternative.

As momentous and pressing as these issues are, they're only the thin edge of the 21st-century wedge. Clearly, we have entered a multipolar world. Clearly, America can no longer call the shots, if indeed she ever could. Just as clearly, however, the U.S. retains a unique form of cultural leadership that will prove far more potent in shaping the future than aircraft carrier groups or even the Sony Walkman. Soviet youth like rock'n'roll. Chinese youth quote Jefferson. Everyone, for reasons that are still mysterious, wants a Big Mac. American culture, currently the "Best of the West," will grow increasingly global, increasingly adept at synthesizing and harnessing the world's most promising ideas. This "cultural capital," which has both shaped and told the character of every American generation, will not soon be exhausted. Our ultimate resource, what some have with hopeless inadequacy termed "information," is American culture, ironically derided over the centuries by conservatives as both mongrelized and vulgar.

What will boomers' new positions of power in the political and economic marketplace and our new responsibilities as parents generate in the coming years? Is it possible to reach back to the ideals of youth for decisions in maturity? Is there any choice, as Schlesinger contends? Or were the people in whom Chief Justice Warren placed his hope a hopeless, if noisy, minority, just as Richard Nixon argued all along and as Ronald Reagan proved forever, world without end, amen? After all, Clarence Thomas is a baby boomer.

You won't be surprised to find that I agree with the late Chief Justice. There are '60s bashers and '60s boosters. I am one of the latter (on condition that I don't have to relive them). My '60s decade ran roughly from the assassination of JFK in '63 to the heyday of Watergate and the OPEC oil embargo in '73. In keeping with our theme of tidy history, the end of "the '60s" was precisely the time Americans got their first real whiff of imperial rot.

As noted, and depending on how we react, this inevitable and much-bemoaned erosion of "power" may not really matter very much. In future, military and even economic hegemony as historically known will pale in significance to the value of culture, both abroad and, far more importantly, *at home*. We are now being forced by events to consciously seize control of our culture. In the last analysis, and for boomers in the driver's seat, this means making sense of the great ferment that was the '60s, roughly the last time America produced very much in the way of original thinking in social policy and elsewhere. In so doing, we can indeed, as Warren hoped, "right wrongs done by former generations"—including our own. ■

Travis Charbeneau is a writer living in Richmond, Va.



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Ozone

Continued from page 13

menting the 1990 Clean Air Act's requirement. According to Doniger, the EPA isn't disputing the regulation, "they are just late." Doniger attributes the delay to staff shortages in the agency, and he says the NRDC may file a lawsuit to spur the agency to issue the regulations.

Martha Dye, a policy specialist with EPA's Global Change Division, says that it is too soon to call the provisions of Bush's suggested plan loopholes. "There's the possibility of some limited exemptions [from the phaseout plan], particularly for the servicing of existing equipment, especially if retrofitting is impossible, or for certain essential uses," Dye says. "All that has yet to be determined. We are hoping substitutes would be available so that we would not have to grant those kinds of exemptions." Dye says the EPA will present a proposal implementing Bush's phaseout scheme around the beginning of April, after which the agency will begin gathering data and looking into the possibility of exemptions.

Bush also suggested there might be some acceleration of the hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) phaseout, currently scheduled for 2030. HCFCs, which deplete ozone at much lower rates, can replace some CFCs. HCFC 22, which can be used for refrigeration and to produce foam packaging, is only 1/20th as destructive to ozone as the CFCs it can replace. But HCFCs are not safe for the ozone layer. And with 60 years' worth of long-lived CFCs already waiting to start their destructive cycle, any addition to the atmosphere's load of ozone-destroying chemicals could prove too much.

Even at the lesser rate, HCFC 22 will still cause a great deal of ozone depletion if it captures larger market shares and allows industry a more leisurely search for ozone-safe alternatives. In fact, HCFC 22 is another example of what environmentalists call "linguistic detoxification." Until 1988, the chemical was classified as a CFC. That year, the EPA allowed Dupont to reclassify the chemical as an HCFC, thus allowing McDonald's to claim their foam burger boxes were no longer produced with CFCs.

Taken together, the scientific reports of the last year suggest that ozone depletion is happening faster than expected and with more disastrous consequences than had been previously anticipated. Unfortunately, the White House response—though touted as quick and comprehensive—proves, on closer examination, to have been long overdue and full of loopholes.

Ever since the scandals of the early Reagan era showed that the U.S. public opposed the government actively aiding environmental destruction, the White House has instead employed a divide-and-conquer environmental strategy. When Congress passes strong environmental laws, the White House and EPA soften the impact on business by creating loopholes and delaying regulations.

Now those two tricks have shown up again at the heart of the administration's response to ozone depletion.

W.K. Burke writes frequently for *In These Times* on environmental issues.

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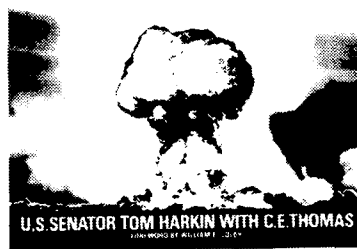
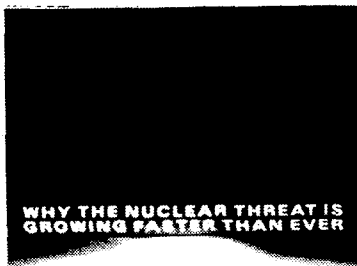
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Tues., March 31, 8:00 p.m.—Feminist Theory: The Second Wave, taught by Lynn Chancer; second of five sessions; session 2: The Development of Radical and Cultural Feminism; \$35 for remaining four sessions or \$10 per individual session.

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Wed., April 8, 6:00 p.m.—American Economic History, taught by Marc Chandler; start of third of four five-session units; Unit III focuses on Corporate Reconstruction prior to World War II; \$50 per unit.

Fri., April 10, 6:30 p.m.—Pot Luck Dinner and Discussion; Admission: one dish.

Mon., April 13, 6:00 p.m.—Foundations of Marxism: Culture of Domination/Cultures of Resistance, taught by Jeremy Raw; first of ten sessions; free.

Tues., April 14, 8:00 p.m.—Feminist Theory: The Second Wave, taught by Lynn Chancer; fourth of five sessions; session 4: Sexuality Debates within the Feminist Movement: Toward a Theoretical and Political Synthesis; \$20 for remaining two sessions or \$10 per individual session.

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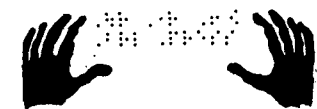
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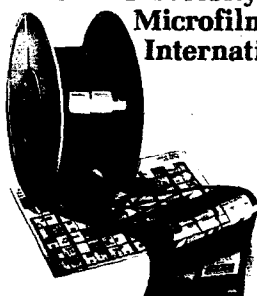
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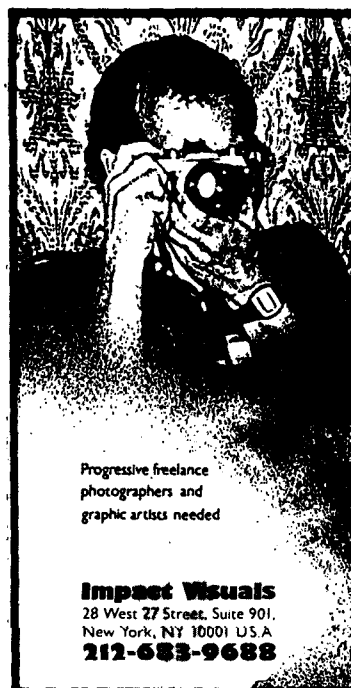
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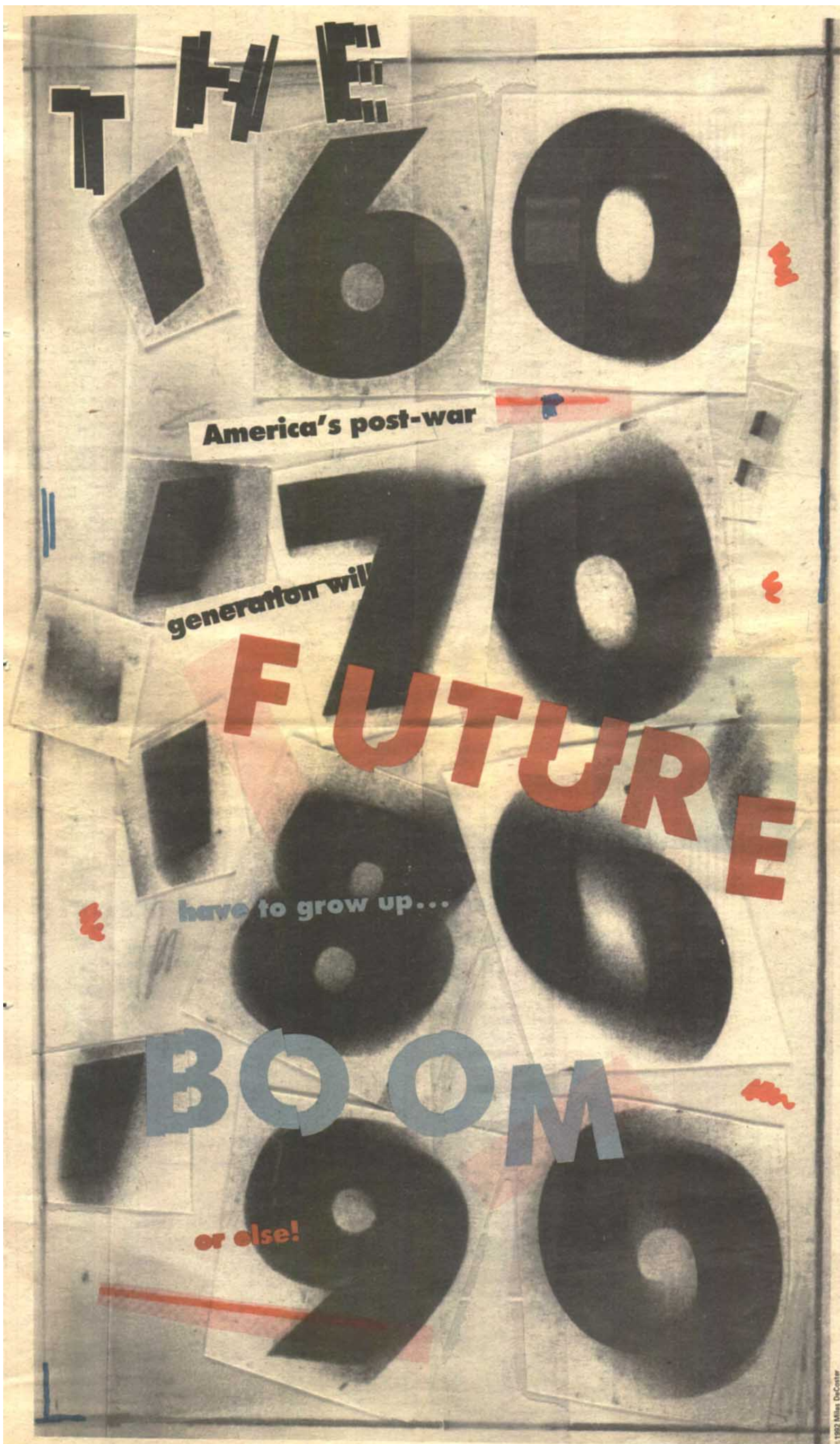
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By Travis Charbeneau

UPON HIS RETIREMENT IN 1969, Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote to his grandson Jeff: "My hope is in the young people of today. I believe that they can and that they will bring to bear the strength of their idealism to right the wrongs that regrettably have been done by former generations, and particularly my own."

Reading this now, many of us will not hesitate to write off Warren's hope as naive and misplaced. After much promising *Sturm und Drang* during the '60s, the baby boom generation went on to make the '70s the "Me Decade" and the '80s the "Decade of the Yuppie," losing any claim we may have had to "strength of idealism."

But is this a premature judgment? After all, boomers are only now coming to positions of real power in the public arena. In private life, our prolonged adolescence is only now ending with the full responsibilities of parenting. It's entirely possible, perhaps even inevitable, that we won't discover what the '60s were really about until well into the '90s.

First, is there a truth-in-labeling issue connected to this tidy packaging of decades? As "fin de millenium" approaches, our culture has developed something of a fetish for characterizing decades as though they were epochs as drawn-out and momentous as the Mesozoic or Pleistocene. Second, and more importantly, is there any validity to the similarly wholesale and perhaps equally inflated characterization of not only an entire generation but the largest U.S. demographic cohort ever to appear? If so, what impacts might be predicted, not just for the '90s but for the entire Trans-Industrial Era?

That last appellation gives partial answer to our first question. Coined by futurist Willis B. Harman, "Trans-Industrial Era" describes the current period of change, estimated to run from 30 to 50 years, perhaps from the early '70s to the 2020s. During this time, most of us will not be surprised to learn, civilization is supposed to make a transition from the Industrial Era to ... something else ... perhaps what futurist Alvin Toffler has called "The Third Wave," or the much-vaunted "Information Era" or, simply, the "Post-Industrial Era," a nicely open-ended term that tells us where we've been without presuming to predict where we're going.

Fast forward: Few will question that a period of hectic transition, whatever the moniker, is certainly upon us. But is it merely from "the best of times, worst of times" bag of change—the perennial stirring of the pot? Or is something truly unique happening?

Consider that the Neolithic Revolution—when we learned to hatch (rather than hunt) our meat and

Continued on page 20